THE SURRY COTTAGE.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE

READER.

REPROVE and condemn with freedom and candour. If an opportunity offers, and truth permits, applaud and commend. Though the ſmile of approbation will afford a peculiar ſatisfac-

ſatisfaction, the frown of cenſure ſhall not diſpleaſe. A difference in ſentiments cannot create a diſguſt, when you are aſſured, that the writer means not to offend.

TIRED

TIRED with the noiſe and nonſenſe of the town about miniſterial blunders and timidity, and American wiſdom and proweſs, I reſolved to retire into the country at ſome diſtance from the metropolis. I did not intend to ſpend my time idly, in ſauntering about a village, lounging at a coffee-houſe, or ſporting with the ſquire of the pariſh. I purpoſed to employ my pen in writing on ſuch ſubjects, which might ariſe from the company I ſhould meet with, the converſation I might engage in, and the reflections, which unexpected incidents would afford. Subjects, which I ſhall endeavour to make entertaining, inſtructive, or uſeful.

To accompliſh this purpoſe I ſought for a lonely cot in an obſcure village, whoſe inhabitants were ſimple and ho-

neſt, unacquainted with the politics, and untainted with the vices, of the age. I took a circuit ſeveral miles round the ſuburbs of the metropolis without ſucceſs. I even deſpaired of meeting ith the fawvourite ſpot. All, from the ſquire to the peaſant, were full of matters, which did not belong to them, and they underſtood not. Their ſentiments of men and things were the ſame, in expreſſion only different; each condemning, or applauding, with equal confidence and obſtinacy, meaſures, of which from a total ignorance they were incompetent judges.

Troubled at the fruitleſs endeavour, I ſet off for town with a reſolution to continue in my native place. The coach being full, I was obliged to take up with the outſide. We had not gone three miles, before an heavy rain fell, and, very fortunately, juſt as we came to a toll-gate. I got down, leaving the coach to proceed on the journey, and

and went into the cottage for ſhelter from the ſtorm. The old man and his wife received me kindly, and wiſhed me to put off my clothes. Finding no inconvenience from the wet, I kept them on.

When it grew towards evening, I aſked, if there was an inn in the place. They anſwered, If I thought their homely dwelling a ſuitable accommodation, they could furniſh me with a bed. I readily accepted the offer; and, having made a light ſupper of country fare, retired to reſt. In the morning I viewed the apartment, which was neat and clean; the furniture, though old, decent, and the back windows opened into a park over a ſmall and well furniſhed garden, belonging to the tenement. What attracted my attention was a book-caſe, which contained a few well choſen books. This afforded an additional pleaſure, believing the old man to have been a reader, and that

he would prove an agreeable companion, provided we could ſettle the terms; the cottage being, what was ſought for, retired, not gloomy, and at a proper diſtance from the road.

The old pair were up, and had delayed their breakfaſt, being unwilling to diſturb me. On coming down, after the uſual compliments paſſed, I aſked, if the apartment, wherein I had laid, was a ſpare room, which, if they had no objection, I would take for a year certain. He anſwered, he kept it for his ſon, who lived in town, but it was at my ſervice, if not too mean for ſuch a gentleman. When he came down into the country, they would ſo contrive matters, that I ſhould not be put to the leaſt inconvenience for a bed. The terms were immediately propoſed, and accepted.

The remaining part of the breakfaſt was taken up in inquiries about the neighbourhood, the different ſeats, the gentry,

gentry, the manner of living, the curioſities, and the manufactories. From the ſenſible anſwers returned, I perceived my landlord to poſſeſs a tolerable underſtanding, and diſcovered him to have been the head gardener to a perſon of diſtinction, and after marriage to have kept a public inn; wherein, by giving large credit and bad debts, he had near exhauſted, what he had acquired by his profeſſion. To prevent a failure he gave up the inn, and rented the toll-gate, which yielded a comfortable ſubſiſtence.

They knew no want, if they enjoyed not ſuperfluities. They had, what was ſufficient, the neceſſaries of life; they envied not the poſſeſſors of its luxuries. Being innocent, they were cheerful; being temperate, they were healthy. They ſlept in quiet, having nothing within to tempt a man to diſhoneſty. They were a contented and a loving couple. Humble as my abode is, the

reader will envy the happineſs of the tenants. I do aſſure him, they would not exchange the cottage for the palace, nor the old cane chair for the monarch's throne. Their courtiers were honeſt ruſtics, who neither flattered, nor diſſembled, and their body guard [not a mercenary band] a little dog, whoſe recompenſe was the crumbs, which fell from the table.

The tea-table was ſcarce removed, before the curate of the pariſh came, who frequently called at the cottage for an hour's converſation. I was introduced. We ſoon became familiar. The recommendation was ſufficient. I requeſted the favour of his company to dinner, and prevailed. The deficiencies of the board were amply made good by a luxuriancy of mirth. We parted at a ſeaſonable hour and in perfect good humour, to which intoxication is a ſtranger.

An Account of the Curate.

The curate, with whom I had contracted an acquaintance through the intereſt of the old man, was about forty, his income thirty, with an addition of fifteen pounds for aſſiſtance at a neighbouring church. He had received his education at a public ſchool in Devonſhire under a learned maſter; who, finding him to be a lad of genius, took a pleaſure in cultivating, and improving it. When he had finiſhed the ſcholaſtic buſineſs, he was ſent to the univerſity, where, by the help of exhibitions, and the aſſiſtance of relations, he had a decent ſupport. When of age to take orders he left college, having no intereſt to procure a fellowſhip. He complained much of the bad government of the univerſities; founders kin, if a dunce, having the preference to the man of letters. He wiſhed alſo, that fellowſhips were temporary, not perpetual; that the poſſeſſors after a certain

term of years ſhould come abroad from their cells, and let the public receive the benefit of their ſtudies, and not be immured within college walls, ſpending their lives, if not idly, unprofitably, in eating, drinking, ſleeping, reading, and lounging. His firſt employment was in town, in the ſtation of an aſſiſtant curate at twenty pounds a year; which, by reading of prayers at ſixpence a turn, burying the dead at threepence per head, little or great, young or old, and now and then a ſermon at four ſhillings, was increaſed to thirty pounds. After ſix months drudgery at the altar, he had a curacy offered him in the city, upon the removal of the curate, at twenty-five pounds, being an advancement of five pounds; the Rector, whoſe living was upwards of three hundred, and worth ten thouſand pounds, with *one* child, modeſtly ſaying, that twenty pounds was ſomewhat too little to ſupport the character of a gentleman.

tleman. Shocked at the propoſal, tired with the fatigue, and diſguſted at the meanneſs of his employment, he retired to the country with the laudable deſire of improving himſelf in his ſtudies. He hath been upon the curacy near ſeventeen years, eſteemed and beloved by the pariſhioners. Reading, he ſaid, diverted the gloomy and melancholy thoughts, which would overwhelm the man of ſenſe and feeling, in being doomed to live in indigence and obſcurity. He hath often expreſſed a wiſh, that, like to his brother Tom, he had been bred up in ignorance, and followed the plough, rather than have been the gentleman and ſcholar with the beggarly income of a porter. He is a batchelor. The difficulties and perplexities of his poor married brethren were he ſaid no encouragement to partake of, or try, the pleaſures of matrimony. The celibacy of the prieſts in the Romiſh church he applauded for

a rational ſcheme. Why ſhould the poor parſon be permitted to marry, when the conſequence is the raiſing a numerous offspring only to inherit poverty and rags? He thought it extremely hard, that the inferior clergy, who had a mechanical turn, or a knowledge of phyſic and ſurgery, ſhould be excluded the benefits of the practice, which they might execute conſiſtent with the clerical office, and be enabled to make a proviſion for their family. Making of tents, catching of fiſh, and preſcribing for the ſick were no inconvenience, nor diſgrace, to the preaching of a Luke, a Peter, and a Paul. Would the ſetting of a bone, or the finiſhing of a watch, interfere in theſe days with the clerical profeſſion? If a ſuitable proviſion is not made for the clergy, the permiſſion to follow genteel employments is reaſonable, it is not diſallowed by religion, nor is the law againſt it. By ſuch permiſſion they would

would keep themſelves from ſtarving, and their families from being burthenſome to a pariſh after their deceaſe.

Reflections on the inferior Clergy.

The hardſhips and diſtreſſes of the inferior clergy, which muſt affect every one not loſt to the feelings of humanity, [even an infidel, though he hates the profeſſion, muſt be ſhocked with the ſufferings of the man,] are a national diſgrace. Is there a ſet of men more uſeful for the purpoſes of religion and morality? Is there a ſet of men more ſhamefully neglected, and unprovided for? Several of them are known to be men of abilities, their condition therefore is the more pitiable; who, after having ſpent a little fortune to procure a liberal education, are confined to leſs pay than a common mechanic. *He* without any diſguſt to his employers can execute his work in filthineſs and rags, whilſt *they* are compelled to ap-

pear in public decent and clean, that they may preſerve their perſon from ridicule, and the profeſſion from contempt. Hard lot for the gentleman and the ſcholar, if not to be in want of the neceſſaries of life, to be reduced to a bare ſufficiency. For what more can the mean ſtipend of thirty or forty pounds per annum produce? Wretched ſubſiſtence! whilſt many of his dignified brethren, ſuperiors indeed in wealth and ſtation, not in ingenuity and learning, live in luxury and eaſe upon their hundreds, and thouſands. But Heaven in reverſion may be thought a full compenſation for the want of earthly comforts. A parliamentary regulation is become neceſſary in the church. The principal obſtruction, which, we fear, in theſe times of diſſipation and extravagance will continue, is the proviſion wanted for the younger branches of neceſſitous peers, and commoners. It would be ſome remedy for the evil, if no

no more were trained up to the work of the miniſtry than the eccleſiaſtical revenue will decently ſupport, and the principal emoluments of the church were to be beſtowed upon them, who, either by their writings, or an aſſiduous application to the duties of their function, ſhall beſt deſerve them. This would excite a ſpirit of emulation amongſt the clergy. There would be a conſtant ſupply of good reſident pariſh prieſts, much wanted, and a ſufficient number of able defenders of our moſt holy religion, very ſcarce. To the ſcanty pittance and the impoſſibility of ſucceeding in the church by merit, it is owing, that the church in the inferior departments is filled with clerical coblers, fiddlers, footmen, meal-men, broken attornies, and apothecaries, with vagrants, who never were in orders, and dunces, who ought never to have been in orders, to the eternal diſgrace of thoſe, who recommended them, and

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not to the honour of thoſe, who admitted them. To ſuch perſons, deſtitute of every other proviſion, an hungry meal, or a mouldy c uſt, is better than abſolute ſtarving. We cannot be ſurpriſed at the multitude of ſtrange opinions and abſurd doctrines delivered from the pulpit in theſe days, when many of the preachers have none other call to the divine work than meer neceſſity, have thruſt themſelves into the prieſts office and have not received even a common ſchool education; who, inſtead of being able to inſtruct others, ſtand in great need of inſtruction themſelves. Things are not likely to mend, whilſt the principal livings are moſt ſcandalouſly monopolized, not to ſay given to ſeveral, whoſe indolence, or inability, would reflect diſhonour on any profeſſion. If religion is thought neceſſary by the policy of ſtates for the better government of the people, the miniſters of it ſhould be decently ſupported.

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I do not mean to be pampered in luxury, and to live at eaſe, but to be preſerved from poverty and contempt, to make a proviſion for their families, and not leave them to be maintained by the frugal hand of charity, or to receive the parſimonious alms of a pariſh.

The Parſon, having a leiſure hour to ſpare, called at the cottage, and ſpent the evening. In the courſe of the converſation the American war came up, which, he remarked, if productive of none other bad conſequence, was injurious to trade, and occaſioned a great ſtagnation in the manufactories. I obſerved, that this loſs would be amply reimburſed in a few years by the commerce opened, and carrying on, with Ruſſia; that the Americans for ſeveral years have taken none other commodities, than what they could not purchaſe from foreign markets, or fabricate within themſelves by the artizans and manufacturers, whom, either choice, or neceſ-

ſity, had occaſioned to emigrate from the mother country, and to ſettle in America.

A Reflection on the Deadneſs of Trade.

Notwithſtanding the complaints of the deadneſs of trade, no buſineſs ſtirring, no orders from abroad, nor at home, no debts paying, tradeſmen in general live well. About forty years ago we were in no danger of being run over by the carriages of citizens, not one to be ſeen from Charing-croſs to Whitechapel. Now there is ſcarce an wholeſale dealer, who hath not his carriage, or country ſeat. They have their routs, card-tables, and viſiting days. They are to be ſeen in the different ſeaſons of the year at Bath, Briſtol, Margate &c. The retail dealers have their chaiſe and country lodgings, and not a few of their journeymen can hire a nag on the Sunday, and are equally well clad with their maſters. If we add the numerous and genteel appear-

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ances of tradeſmen at every place of public reſort, the huſband aſſuming the appellation of the Gentleman, and the wife claiming the title of Madam, who can think, there is any real diſtreſs, or that their complaints of want are juſt, when ſo much luxury and extravagance abound? If trade is dead, the manner of living ſhews no want of credit. Is there a village within a few miles of town not chiefly inhabited by Londoners? Bad as trade is, what man of them, who cannot afford his bottle and bird, whoſe fathers were content with a cheerful glaſs at a pariſh, or company's feaſt, and thought it luxurious indulgence to have a tit-bit on the anniverſary of the wedding, or birth-day. The ſirloin, their grand repaſt, is meer garniſh for the table of their degenerate ſons; it is food for ſervants. Dainties, ſuitable to the dignity and fortune of the peer, are a common diſh. They need not to inveigh againſt the follies

follies and vices of their ſuperiors, for they are not behind them in pride and vanity. They know no want, they feel no diſtreſs. *The poor artizan* and *manufacturer* indeed have a right to complain, at whoſe expence they become rich, and by the ſweat of their brows are ſupplied with the means of ſupporting that extravagance and prodigality, which, by rendering the neceſſaries of life ſcarce and dear, impoveriſh and overwhelm *them*. Bankruptcies, it is true, are frequent. They prove nothing. Theſe failures do not always proceed from a want and dearth of buſineſs, or the frauds and roguiſhneſs of debtors. Avarice and prodigality are the general cauſes of theſe melancholy events. Haſting to become rich, the tradeſman undertakes more buſineſs, than he hath ability to execute, or property to anſwer; or upon his entrance into buſineſs commences the gentleman, which occaſions inattention,

tention, indolence, and living beyond its profits; the conſequence of which is beggary and ruin.

The Parſon's Account of the Lord of the Manor.

An eaſy good natured man, who had received a liberal education, not much improved in retirement. He wanted not for parts, but the cultivation being rendered unneceſſary by the poſſeſſion of a fine eſtate, he gave up the ſtudent, and commenced the country gentleman. [The caſe of many a rich heir, whoſe abilities and ſervices by an early ſucceſſion to the paternal inheritance are for ever loſt to the public by living in an inactive and indolent ſtate.] His books were ſoon laid aſide for the rural amuſements of hunting and ſhooting. He kept a good table, and had a ſet of cheerful companions of the ſame taſte with himſelf. Though not very entertaining, he was far from being

being the diſagreeable companion. What is rare to be met with at the tables of the great and polite, he permitted no ſwearing, obſcene diſcourſe, nor lewd jeſting; nor would he allow any one to talk on religious ſubjects over the bottle. He could not endure the preſumption of country politicians. Politics, he ſaid, was a topic not fit for thoſe to diſcuſs, who handle the file, and follow the plough, for which nature had formed them with ſuitable talents: of ſtate affairs their occupations made them improper and incompetent judges. The beſt news for them was to know themſelves, and the moſt profitable wiſdom to tranſact their own buſineſs well, leaving matters of ſtate to the conduct and management of them, who are intruſted by the Sovereign and the people. He was not leſs ſhrewd on the behaviour of the little cit, whoſe intereſt he thought would be better advanced in the ſhop

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and behind the counter, than in ſotting at beer-houſes, and meddling in matters he cannot comprehend, inveighing againſt characters he knows not, and correcting errors of government, which he underſtands not. It was better for the peace and order of the metropolis, when political ſquabbles were left to thoſe, who are immediately concerned in diſputes of that nature.

Your city, added the Parſon, was honourable, citizens were reſpectable at court, their requeſts to parliament heard with attention and ſucceſs, and their addreſſes to the Sovereign received with affability and politeneſs, when the magiſtrates were ſelected from ſage and wealthy citizens, men of fair and unblemiſhed reputation, attentive to trade and commerce, and who underſtood the buſineſs of their ſtation. Alas! how fallen is that great city, the mart of the world, from her ancient dignity and importance! She hath now recourſe to aliens

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and foreigners, who have no connection with trade, and are unacquainted with her police, [whoſe recommendation is party principles] to manage and conduct her affairs. Is not the man, who promiſes to ſupport the rights and privileges of the city, much the better citizen than he, who vainly talks of procuring redreſs of national grievances without the ability and importance ſufficient to accompliſh it? If the character given of our Lord, *ſaid the Parſon*, is not ſufficently amiable for imitation, I wiſh every village had ſuch a gentleman.

A Reflection.

Every man to mind his own buſineſs.

There is not a porter, nor labourer, in the kingdom, who is not now the politician. The ſecrets of the cabinet and the intentions of adminiſtration are well known to every petty tradeſman

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in town, and diſcuſſed at every hedge alehouſe in the country. It would be the higheſt affront and inſult to their underſtanding to queſtion, either their knowledge, or judgment, in theſe matters. Every man is ſenſible, that he hath a complete knowledge of politics, though he hath never ſtudied them. In other ſciences [and politics is certainly not the leaſt difficult, intricate, and obſcure; they require a coolneſs, ſedateneſs, deliberation, and judgment, not to be expected in men of buſineſs, perſons of ſlender capacity, and low ſtation in life] he acknowledges it to be neceſſary firſt to learn, before he can either know, or ſpeak of, them, leſt he ſhould become the object of contempt, and ridicule. What wild romantic conjectures are daily and hourly formed upon the tranſactions in the cabinet. The moſt profound ſchemes of the King and the miniſtry are readily diſcerned and fully known by every block-

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head in the kingdom;" who by the gravity of his looks, and ſhrug of his ſhoulder, would perſuade you, that he is in the ſecret, or been behind the curtain. Men talk of peers and ſenators, as if they had a particular intimacy with them, though they are abſolute ſtrangers to their perſons, and can hardly ſpell their names. Hence it frequently happens, that King, Lords, Commons, and Miniſtry are cenſured for ſayings, which they never uttered, and condemned for doing, what they never thought of. The public conjectures on political meaſures [for conjectures they only can be] are ſeldom right. Why? The true motives of political meaſures are, what they ought always to be, known to very few. The plans of government are, if we may be permitted the alluſion, like to the ſcripture prophecies, myſterious. The former, beſt known, when executed; the latter, beſt underſtood, when completed.

completed. Cannot we find a much better employment of time than in going about, like to the Athenians of old, to inquire, what new thing to day? Do we not willingly ſuffer ourſelves to be impoſed upon by the greateſt abſurdities and the moſt glaring falſhoods, invented and circulated by Jews, ſtock-jobbers, and brokers, becauſe novelty is pleaſing to us? Will the talking hours and days ſucceſſively upon ſtate affairs, which are never certain and permanent, always inconſtant and fluctuating, from the fallibility of human knowledge, and the ambitious and intereſted views of the different managers, carry on buſineſs with advantage, and reputation? There is a natural curioſity indeed in the ſoul of man to hear and ſee things new and ſtrange. Is it however an inſtance of wiſdom and prudence to gratify this curioſity at the expence of credit? Is it to be admitted for a plea ſufficient to excuſe idleneſs?

The inveighing againſt and condemning public meaſures will neither fill the purſe, nor feed the bell; is no juſtification for indolence, or negligence, in domeſtic affairs. Let every one mind that particular buſineſs or calling, in which divine providence hath placed him. Though he hath *time* ſufficient *for it*, he hath *no time* to ſpare *from it*. Leave we the public concerns to their management, to whom they are committed, and to their inſpection, who are appointed for that purpoſe; not idly prating about what others ought, or ought not, to do, but being particularly attentive to what we ought to do, remembering the ſaying of the wiſe man, That the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury, and he, that liſteneth to vain perſons, ſhall have in the end poverty enough. We ſhall find it more beneficial to explore, what is paſſing *within* than *without* us; of more importance to know ourſelves than others;

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to ſee, whether we, not miniſters, are acting according to duty, whether *we*, not they, do right; and, before we condemn them for neglect, be ſure, that we can honeſtly acquit ourſelves of folly. The approbation *of our own, conduct* will be more profitable than the cenſuring *them:* Far better than the going from door to door, wandering up and down the town from tavern to tavern, from alehouſe to alehouſe, from coffee-houſe to coffee-houſe, to hear and to tell the news of the day, to the hindrance and neglect of buſineſs—the acquiring an habit of idleneſs and drunkenneſs—the encouraging diſputes and quarrels—the cauſing differences and animoſities between friends and relations—the impairing of the health by midnight converſation, and the expending the profits of trade fooliſhly and extravagantly to the *impoveriſhment, if not the ruin,* both of ſelf, and family.

The Diſtreſſes of the Country Poor.

The diſtreſſes of the country poor having been frequently the ſubject of converſation in town, I was reſolved to viſit the neighbouring villages, and examine into the truth of the report. In my walk the following reflections occurred. The time is coming, and approacheth haſtily, when the people of this land will conſiſt only of rich and poor. Go round the country, and viſit the ſtreets of the metropolis, and you will ſee no end to the laying field to field, and houſe to houſe. Theſe are the principal cauſes of the preſent diſtreſs and wretchedneſs throughout the kingdom. Farms, which at the acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty to the throne were occupied by five tenants, are now conſolidated into one; and tradeſmen, whoſe fathers were content to let their neighbours live equally with themſelves, by renting a ſingle

ſingle tenement, and following their own buſineſs, now engage in various branches of trade, and are not ſatisfied with two, three, four, or five houſes. In what muſt this curſed avarice of individuals terminate? In the country beggary, in the town knavery. The poor muſt, and will, live. If ſubſiſtence is not to be had by induſtry and labour, they will ſeek it by fraud and rapine. Hanging is more eligible than ſtarving; and no laws, either of reaſon, of religion, or of the ſtate, will avail againſt the pleadings and calls of nature. The huſbandman and mechanic have an undoubted right to the neceſſaries of life; they want, they aſk, no more. Let them have food and raiment, no matter how coarſe the one, and how homely the other, and they will reſt content. But ought the wealthy and the great to regale luxuriouſly on veniſon and turtle, and repoſe themſelves on beds of down, and the

laborious huſbandman to feed on grains and ſkim-milk, and lie down on a bed of ſtraw, and the induſtrious mechanic eat offals, and ſleep on flocks? Such wretchedneſs, ſuch miſery, I have known, I have ſeen. Is this the country celebrated for its generoſity to ſtrangers, even to Otaheites, to have no feelings for its comfortleſs, deſtitute, and emaciated natives?

I ſhall not mention the numerous objects of diſtreſs, that I met with in my walk, with the defenceleſs and ruinous cottages of the poor, too feeble to work, too modeſt to beg, too honeſt to ſteal, no fire on the hearth, no poultry in the yard, no meal in the tub, no clothes on their back to cover their nakedneſs. The huſband lamenting, O, woe is me, my leanneſs, my leanneſs! The children crying, Give, Give, and the parent feeding them with the bread of tears. Infants periſhing in the womb, not having ſtrength to break

break forth; or dying, when they have received the breath of life, for the want of nouriſhment to ſupport, and continue it.

Let the following inſtance ſuffice to ſhew the wretchedneſs of the neglected and deſerted poor. The horrible tale ſhall ſpeak for itſelf. The diſtreſs needs no colouring from art. The blood of avarice itſelf muſt chill at the narration. Entering into a little cot for a ſhelter from an impending ſtorm, I beheld famine herſelf, ſitting on the floor, ſurrounded with ſeven naked and ſtarved children. Upon the raiſing of her head I addreſſed her, From whence, good woman, came this deplorable diſtreſs and miſery? She anſwered, Theſe are the orphans of an unfortunate brother, who, being rendered incapable of working for his family by an ague and fever, applied to the pariſh for relief, from whom he received four ſhillings and ſixpence weekly

for his and *their ſupport.* This ſmall allowance, good Sir, and the continual cries of his dear children for bread, ſo affected him, when he poor man had nothing to give but kind looks and tender expreſſions, that one evening, when I was gone into the fields and lanes to pick up a little dung to kindle a fire, he called theſe poor children [here ſhe burſt into a flood of tears] to the ſide of his bed, and having moſt affectionately embraced and kiſſed them, he turned to the eldeſt, about fourteen, and ſaid, My dear boy, the hope and ſtay of my family, if God ſhall bleſs you after my death, take care of your brothers and ſiſters, do what you can to feed and clothe them. Tears flowed too faſt for ſaying any thing more. Then, recovering himſelf, and ſtedfaſtly looking up to Heaven, he deeply ſighed, and, in the anguiſh and bitterneſs of his ſoul, prayed, ſaying, O God, hear me, preſerve

preſerve theſe innocents from diſtreſs, and forgive their unhappy father. This ſaid, he cut his throat, and immediately expired. I dropt ſomething into her hand, and immediately withdrew to give vent to humanity.

The Parſon and the Squire called in the evening at the cottage, to whom I related the melancholy adventure of the day, which brought on the following inquiry into the various cauſes of the diſtreſſes of the times.

A Conversation.

An Inquiry into the Cauſes of the preſent Diſtreſs.

One cauſe, *ſaid the Squire*, of the dearneſs of animal food, of herbage, and corn, is the prodigious increaſe of horſes. We ſeem from the number kept to be Swift's iſland of Houyhnhnms. They are the bane of agriculture, and bread and animal food with

vegetables will never be plenty, nor purchaſed at the price *of the wages* of the labourer and mechanic, [*which ought to be raiſed in proportion to the increaſe of their employers profits*] till the breed is put under ſome reſtriction. A tax on all perſons, who under ſuch degrees and limitations ſhall keep a coach, or ſaddle horſes, would add to the revenue of the ſtate, conſiderably help the plough, provide victuals for the poor, and by reducing the incredible number of carriages, recover the neceſſary and almoſt loſt diſtinction and ſubordination amongſt the different degrees of members in ſociety. Theſe Houyhnhnms afford not beef, mutton, leather, butter, cheeſe, milk &c. but deprive the uſeful and profitable animals, who do, of large and green paſtures.

This, *anſwered the Parſon*, is a principal, not the only, cauſe of the diſtreſs. What think ye of incloſures, which

which deprive the cottagers of turf for firing, and paſture for their cows and poultry? The conſolidation of farms, which by annihilating little farmers, whom neceſſity compelled to bring their corn and cattle to market, and the augmentation of eſtates, owing to the luxury and prodigality of the owners, have enhanced the value of the different produce. The continual tranſportation of ſheep from different parts of England to France, the running of wheat to foreign markets, and the turnpike roads, which have carried many reſpectable families to town, to the ruin of the ancient hoſpitality, have not a little contributed to our diſtreſſes in the country, and have raiſed the price of proviſions in the metropolis.

You are right, Parſon, *I replied.* The amazing enlargement of the ſuburbs, to the irrecoverable loſs of a num-

ber of farms, which ſupplied the town with eggs, butter, calves, pigs and poultry, to accommodate the country gentry with princely habitations, have made things dear with us. To which alſo have contributed, *the numberleſs ordinaries and chop-houſes*, where the little gentleman, petty tradeſman, and clerks of every profeſſion, luxuriouſly indulge in the choiceſt delicacies of the ſeaſon—*Country houſes*, which occaſion the keeping of two tables, when the proviſion of one would be ſufficient for the family—*The prodigious number of livery ſervants*, who cannot be content with plain food, but muſt have their tit bits with their maſters—*The general practice of tea drinking*, of benefit to the luxurious and high liver, which hath occaſioned an unneceſſary conſumption of coal, wood, butter, milk and ſugar, and the daily and *almoſt incredible ſlaughter of pigs, lambs, calves and every kind*

kind of poultry to gratify the appetite of the glutton, and to please the taste of the epicure.

Let us dwell no more on the disagreeable subject, *said the Squire.* How to relieve the distresses of the poor is an object worthy of consideration, and is the grand difficulty.

A thought immediately occurred, which if carried into execution, might be the happy means of lessening, if not totally removing, the complaints of want. Inclosures *for the distress of the poor* are now carrying on throughout England; Why not inclosures *for the benefit of the poor?* How many thousands of acres lie waste and uncultivated on Epping and Hampshire forests, Enfield Chace, Bagshot and Hounslow heaths, and indeed all over the kingdom. To the multitude of artisans and manufacturers, who are straitened in their circumstances, and to others, who with difficulty procure the common

mon neceſſaries of life for the want of conſtant employment, relief from individuals is temporary. Pariſhes, from the continual increaſe of the poor, and the dearneſs of proviſions, are unable to afford *them* more than a ſcanty ſubſiſtence. It ſeems to be in the power of government *alone* to give a proper and effectual relief. His Majeſty is generous, and feels for the diſtreſſes of his poorer ſubjects. He hath publicly expreſſed it, by recommending them to the care of the two houſes, though unhappily for them they continue to this day unnoticed. The incloſing part of the waſte grounds, and allotting to each family, who ſhall accept them, a certain number of acres, and advancing a ſum of money for the purpoſes of clearing, preparing, and ſtocking the ground, building convenient tenements, and procuring implements of huſbandry, with an exemption from all taxes for a certain term, would adminiſter

miniſter health, food, and raiment to thouſands of uſeful people, who are now periſhing with hunger, cold, and nakedneſs. They wiſhed ſucceſs to the benevolent plan, and we parted.

The Squire and the Parſon in a morning's walk met with the following incident. Croſſing a dirty lane they obſerved in the ditch a bundle of rags, which the Squire thought to be the baggage of an itinerant beggar, who, he ſuppoſed, had gone into the village, either to beg, or to ſteal.

Good God! How apt are ill thoughts to ariſe in the mind. Hard fate to be poor. It is ſufficient affliction to ſuffer want, and not to have it heightened by a ſuſpicion of guilt. Cold, hunger, and nakedneſs are powerful temptations to tranſgreſs. The philoſopher, who feels them not, cannot tell, how he ſhould act in ſuch a ſituation. We fear for his virtue, if it was put to the trial. Though no excuſe, not even of neceſſity,

neceſſity, can be admitted for acts of diſhoneſty, the plea of poverty, ariſing from misfortunes, not occaſioned by folly and extravagance, extenuates the crime.

Upon a nearer inſpection they perceived the bundle of rags to move, and heard this lamentable complaint iſſuing from it, O wretched being, when will thy miſeries have an end! How inſupportable to human nature is this diſtreſs! A converſation immediately took place. What a miſerable object, *ſaid the Parſon*, is this. Say what, and who, thou art? Why doſt thou tremble? Of whom art thou afraid? *Of man, whoſe form thou weareſt.* We mean not, woman, to inſult and injure, but to aſſiſt and relieve you. *Waſt thou any thing, but what thou art, I could believe thee.*- Was it not a pleaſure, miſtreſs, my profeſſion obliges me to comfort the afflicted. The woman, raiſing her head, looking up, and obſerving the

ſhort

ſhort caſſock, and roſe, [*the diſtinguiſhing habit of the ancient, not the modern, clergy*] ſaid, *Forgive*, Rev. Sir, *the harſh ſpeech, I meant not rudeneſs, to whom reſpect is due.* What is thy tale? Whence cameſt thou? *Preſs not to know*, good Sir, *it will increaſe, not leſſen, my ſorrows. I am a poor unfortunate young woman, loſt through credulity, and abandoned to miſery.*

The Squire, who had hitherto held his peace, broke out, A dirty ſtrumpet, I perceive, a London whore; we have too many of theſe creatures in the country. No matter, replied the Parſon, what ſhe is. If we looked into ourſelves, worthy Sir, we ſhall ceaſe from reproaching this miſerable creature. If we put our hands to our breaſt, and permitted conſcience to ſpeak, we ſhall want that veil to cover our own nakedneſs, which we now refuſe this woman. Reflection is a ſufficient

cient puniſhment for paſt guilt. Her wickedneſs let us leave to God; it will not excuſe, nor juſtify, uncharitableneſs. Conſider your character, Doctor, you will injure it by taking notice of the creature. I ſhall offend humanity more, ſaid the Parſon, in not doing it, and reflect diſhonour on the national virtue, which always feels for the diſtreſſed, even pities the criminal, though it condemns the crime. Come, Parſon, let us away. I follow, Sir. Stir not young woman, from this place, and you may depend upon immediate relief.

He accompanied the Squire home, where the clerk was in waiting for him to attend on a private baptiſm. A fortunate incident for the good man, who was uneaſy, till he had given the promiſed aſſiſtance; rightly conjecturing, from the language and behaviour of the diſtreſſed object, that ſhe was neither

neither the common beggar, nor the ſtrumpet, and her wretchedneſs was rather her misfortune, than fault.

The Curate, having finiſhed the baptiſmal ſervice, haſtened to the cottage, mentioned the affair with the converſation, and intreated me to accompany him to the unhappy and diſtreſſed object. We found the female on the ſame ſpot, where, had it not been for the ſeaſonable relief afforded, ſhe would in all probability have died before morning. Never did I ſee ſuch wretchedneſs! Her looks were wild, ſtrongly expreſſive of the anguiſh of her afflicted ſoul. Her cheeks, through grief and hunger, hollow. Her hair diſhevelled; ſkin ſhrivelled; bones quite bare. Over her limbs was a tattered blanket thrown to conceal, if poſſible, the filthy ſight from human view. Good woman, ſaid the Parſon, with the greateſt mildneſs and tenderneſs, look up. I come with this gentleman

tleman to adminiſter the promiſed relief. She looked up, and ſwooned. During the interval, between the fit and the recovery, we had engaged two countrymen to ſee her ſafe to the cottage, to which we haſtened to make the proper preparation for her reception, the old couple having generouſly offered to take her. When brought, ſhe was put into the ſhed, and through the kind aſſiſtance of the old woman was quickly cleanſed from her naſtineſs; the filthy rags were thrown on the dunghill, and ſhe was clothed with decent, though homely, apparel. In a few days ſhe was ſo well recovered from her weakneſs to give the following account of herſelf:

I am the eldeſt of ſeven children, the daughter of a wealthy and reputable tradeſman in the city of Weſtminſter, who, I fear, is now no more. My parents tenderly loved me, even to a fault, in preference to the reſt of the family.

family. Nothing was wanting, that imagination could invent, or art produce, to adorn the perſon, or embelliſh the mind. I anſwered their expectation in every thing. Their love was repaid with gratitude. They were affectionate, I dutiful. Happy had it met with no interruption.

To complete my education my father was adviſed by an intimate friend to ſend me to France. He replied, that he wanted no additional accompliſhment to an Engliſh education, and he had reaſon to believe, that few females, ſent to nunneries, returned without the loſs of their virginity, or their converſion to popery. Many of the friars, though they wear large beards, having proved young Lotharios.

I finiſhed my education in the country. O! that I had never exchanged the peaceful and virtuous ſpot to have dwelt in the center of vice and folly. My virtue would have been unſullied, and

and I ſhould have been a bleſſing and comfort, not a ſorrow and a curſe, to my loving parents.

The Parſon interrupting ſaid, I agree with you, young woman, you never would have loſt your virtue in the country. We have no libertines reſident amongſt us, nor ſecret places of reſort for the debauchee. Lewdneſs and intemperance are vices unknown to us. When I conſider the licentiouſneſs and profligacy reigning in the metropolis, I rejoice, and am thankful to Heaven, that I have left it. Is it poſſible for a good man to ſleep in quiet, and not be under the apprehenſion of earthquakes, famine, and peſtilence, the miniſters of divine vengeance, when he reflects on the numberleſs ſins daily and hourly committed, even in open day, without any ſenſe of ſhame, or dread of puniſhment, as if it was meritorious to be wicked, and to be good a ſin? As it is the metropolis

of

of the kingdom, ſo is it of wickedneſs.

The Wickedneſs of City and Country conſidered.

Your remark, Rev. Sir, that London is the metropolis of the kingdom, and of wickedneſs, I replied, is right. But from whence come this profligacy and licentiouſneſs? Who are the raſcals and villians, that fill the metropolis with ſin, and make this our Jeruſalem like to Sodom? Unhappily, both for the civil and eccleſiaſtical polity, the metropolis is the place of refuge, the aſylum, for all the knaves and fools in the kingdom. When a man cannot live any longer with credit in the country, or muſt be obliged to leave it for the ſafety of his perſon, he comes to town. Being a ſtranger, he paſſes for an honeſt man, and increaſes the number [already too great] *of country*, not London, *rogues*. I will admit, that

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we Londoners are bad, even wicked to the extreme. On the compariſon however it may appear, that we are equally, if not more virtuous, than your country folk. You innocent, virtuous, and pious creatures can ſit up evening after evening, till three or four in the morning, dancing, ſinging, romping, drinking, and card playing, and your character and credit nothing the worſe with your neighbours; who do indeed the very ſame things. If the ſhepherd hath been too free with the dairy maid, there is no harm done, provided he gives the proper ſecurity to the churchwardens. They are neither ſorry for, nor aſhamed of it. The one goes to his flock, the other to her churn, as if nothing had happened, no ſin had been committed. The frolic, as it is called, affords a little temporary mirth for the villagers, and, when Nell is delivered, all is over, and forgot. The Squire, if he drinks a chearful bottle

bottle, keeps a plentiful table, and is charitable to the poor, may have all the vices of the libertine, and be praiſed and extolled at every market town for a prince of a man. Now, Rev. Sir, when we, *wicked Londoners*, do any of theſe merry and frolickſome things, our folly is accompanied with the loſs of reputation. We are held up to public view for infamous. No one will give us credit for a farthing. Every one is ready to expoſe, not one ſo candid to palliate, the offence. If we are not doomed to the halter, we are ſure to meet with public contempt. Wicked therefore as our Sodom is, and ripe for divine vengeance, as you ſuppoſe, your little Zoar, you find, is not more pure. If you tremble for *our* iniquities, will *your* goodneſs preſerve you from deſtruction? When *we ſhall ſuffer*, I apprehend, it is no ſevere judgment to paſs, *you will not eſcape free.* If you repent not, you will likewiſe periſh.

I ſay not, that *we* need no reformation; better for ſociety and the happineſs of individuals were *we* more pious and honeſt than we really are. We are not ſo phariſaically blind to our faults to commend our own ſuperior righteouſneſs, neither are our crimes and offences ſo atrocious and enormous, that we ſhould account ourſelves, nor be accounted by you, to be ſinners above all men. Compared however with foreign ſtates we are virtuous, even to an extreme. Vices, held by us in the utmoſt abhorrence and deteſtation, are practiſed by them without remorſe, without puniſhment, and, when known, deemed trivial offences. Infamous and immoral as the ſubjects of virtuous George are, they are ſaints, even angels, in compariſon with the ſinners of the profligate Charles, in whoſe reign the metropolis was defiled with the moſt ſhocking impurities and luſts. Bad as the times are, I cannot bring myſelf to think

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that the metropolis is no better than an hell, and its inhabitants, according to you country folk, devils. Neither will I ſuppoſe, that the iniquities of the people are ſo great, and the places of wickedneſs ſo many, that a peſtilence ought to carry off the one, and an earthquake deſtroy the other. Let me notice to you, Rev. Sir, a few inſtances, in which the depravity of former times is corrected within our own memory, though we are not without a multitude of vices to alarm our fears of the divine vengeance. Will that pleaſe? Places of private entertainment, called Hops, to be met with in every alley in the metropolis, wherein indecencies not to be mentioned were practiſed, are deſtroyed. Lincolns Inn, Leiceſter Fields &c. where youth was trained up to idleneſs, gambling and thieving, and paſſengers could not paſs without danger, either of their perſon or property, are become by the incloſures places of ſafety and elegance.

The fairs kept in Smithfield, the Borough, the Spaw and Moorfields, productive of idleneſs, drunkenneſs and debauchery in the lower claſs, are ſuppreſſed. I know of no gang of thieves, now exiſting, ſo terrible, as the Black-boy-alley gang was. Let me add, for the honour of you country folk, who with a phariſaical pride ſay to the vile Londoner, Come not near, ſtand by, I am holier than thou, upon ſearching the annals of Newgate, wherein your honeſt deeds are faithfully recorded, nine out of ten, who have departed out of this world at Tyburn, have been rank ſaplings tranſplanted from the country. Ranger will tell you, that there is ſcarce a female out of the variety of his acquaintance, who hath not brought her ruin to town out of the country. We have private lodgings for the better ſort, and public hoſpitals for the lower claſs. When the affair which brought both to town, is over, the one goes into genteel keeping, the

oth

other turns common proſtitute. Thus doth the country, Rev. Sir, fill the metropolis with diſhoneſty and uncleanneſs, and with all the evils attendant upon theſe vices; making our ſins, light before, like to a grievous burden, too heavy, through your iniquities, to bear. I am no advocate for Methodiſm, but, as a friend to truth, let me aſk, Is there not more of piety and goodneſs, and leſs of ſottiſhneſs and profaneneſs amongſt the common people than in the times preceding the origin of this ſect? I forgot to mention that in every ſtreet, lane, and alley of the metropolis a place of worſhip is to be found with crowded audiences. Surely we muſt have ſome holy and good people. All cannot be hypocrites and ſinners amidſt ſo much piety and godlineſs. To cloſe the compariſon, charity is univerſal. Every diſorder and diſeaſe incident to the human body have its place of cure and relief: The fatherleſs, the friendleſs, the profli-

gate, and the proſtitute have an aſylum. When you are retired to your chamber, Parſon, reflect upon this apology for the metropolis, and if you are thankful to Heaven for your leaving of town, forget not to pray continually to Heaven for your preſervation in the country; for, believe me, you have only changed a Sodom for a Gomorrha.

The Parſon haſtily roſe up, took his beaver, ſhook his head, and, lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he ſpoke, from the ſerioufneſs and earneſtneſs of the addreſs, the real ſentiments of his heart, *O God be thou merciful to both*, and went home immediately. Thus the converſation ended with the conviction of the Parſon, that the Londoners were better than commonly repreſented, and generally believed, and with the candid acknowledgment of the female, that ſhe had given an haſty and raſh judgment.

I went early in the morning to the Parſon,

Parſon, intending to take a breakfaſt, if I found him in good humour after the evening's converſation. He was in a ſerious mood, full of thought, upon what had paſſed, and honeſtly declared, that he firmly believed the comparative remarks to be ſtrictly true. He added a wiſh, that both town and country were equally and truly ſenſible of the danger, to which at this critical ſituation of public affairs their vices and follies expoſed them, and for the national good and proſperity, with their own, were both heartily and ſincerely diſpoſed to amend and reform. To quit the melancholy ſubject, breakfaſt being over, and the morning fine, I propoſed a walk, and a viſit to the cottage, to hear the continuation of the ſtory of the female ſtranger. The Parſon with his uſual good nature readily complied.

In going down a by lane we met with a company of gypſies, whoſe brown complexion, diſmal look, and

roguiſh tricks ſtrike terror into the villagers. If nothing worſe happens from ſuch viſitors, the hedges are ſure to be ſtript of the linen, the yards cleared of the poultry, and the ſimple girl defrauded of her little ſavings by the promiſe of a rich huſband. They ſolicited charity, and we paſſed on. One from the reſt, briſkly following us, aſked leave to tell our fortunes. Not complying with the ſilly requeſt, ſhe gave us a volley of oaths and execrations, threatening us with ſome diſaſter in the way; which no more alarmed my fears, than the promiſe of a good living from the baggage would have given the leaſt encouragement for hope in the Parſon. We got home to the cottage, *not without an accident* to the Parſon of a ſlight ſprain from a fall in getting over a ſtile. This accident with weak minds would have brought credit to the wench, and proved her ſkill in fortune-telling beyond the poſſibility of a doubt. Fortunately the

Parſon

Parſon was not ſuperſtitious, nor the layman credulous. The following reflections occurred in the walk, which upon our arrival at the cottage I requeſted a few moments retirement to commit to writing.

On Fortune-telling and Fortune-tellers.

It is amazing in this improved and enlightened age, that credit ſhould be given to the random ſayings of theſe deplorable and ragged wretches, or any one ſhould be found ſo weak to conſult *them* on future events, and *their brethren in iniquity the fortune-tellers in town*, who acquire a comfortable livelihood from the multitude of fools, who are continually reſorting to them. If what is to be, will certainly be, is it of any uſe to know, what cannot be avoided? If it is dubious, how preſumptuous to pretend to know, how weak to believe, that they do know, what muſt be the effect of chance; what may or

may not, happen? Is it not ridiculous to think, that our future good or bad ſucceſs in life ſhould be determined by being born under certain planets? If things were really ſo, all perſons born under the ſame planets, would be alike wiſe or fooliſh, rich or poor, happy or miſerable. Pompey, Cæſar, and Craſſus were told by theſe planetarians, that they ſhould die in a good old age, full of fame and glory, and happily. Craſſus was killed by the Parthians, Cæſar was ſtabbed by Brutus, and Pompey ſlain by the treachery of a friend. What credulity to rely upon the veracity and ſkill of knaves and cheats, of beggars and vagabonds? What folly to think, that they can ſhew you the way to happineſs, who are themſelves extremely miſerable; or beſtow upon you riches and honours, who can hardly procure a bare ſubſiſtence for themſelves, and whoſe rags will ſcarce cover their nakedneſs.

nakedneſs. What an abſurdity to imagine, that the ſecret tranſactions of our lives paſt, preſent, and future, which can be known only to God, ſhould be communicated to baſe, worthleſs, deſpicable, and wicked wretches, the very refuſe of mankind, the off-ſcouring of the world, and be withheld from the knowledge of the pious, the virtuous, and the good. If a few things happen by meer chance to fall out right, how numberleſs thoſe, which prove, to the confuſion of the deluded inquirers, falſe. The anſwers given to the queſtions put are a kind of riddles; which, like to the heathen oracles, or, to come nearer to our own times, like to the knocking anſwers of Fanny, the Cock-lane Ghoſt, may be accommodated to every event. When they are ſucceſsful, the reaſon is, the perſons, who are weak enough to conſult them, are credulous enough to believe, that, what happens, is a

completion of the prediction, and are apt to labour in reconciling the event with the prediction, however wide the connection. Can we be ſurpriſed at the truth of any prediction, which we endeavour to make credible by ſeeking for an accompliſhment? This is imitating the abſurd conduct of the ancient Egyptians, who placed great confidence in ſigns; which, when they ſaw, they wrote down. If the event had any reſemblance, of what the ſign, according to their imagination of it, did ſignify, they immediately thought *it* foretold that event. The celeſtial bodies may operate upon the human body; in reſpect of any influence on the mind they are paſſive. The allowing ſuch an influence would deſtroy the free agency of man, and take away the future diſtinction of reward and puniſhment. The confidence placed by the vulgar in theſe matters cannot indeed aſtoniſh, when we reflect on the credulity of perſons

perſons of literature and diſtinction in the impoſſibilities of a Toffts, and a Bottle conjurer.

The interval between my abſence and return was filled up in bathing the Parſon's ancle. It was not however much ſwoln, nor accompanied with any lameneſs. Upon my appearance the young woman continued her ſtory.

I was thought to be handſome and delicate; pardon, Sirs, the weakneſs, or, if you pleaſe the vanity of the ſex; in manners engaging, affable, and obliging; I had ſome ſkill in muſic, a tolerable knowledge of letters, and could converſe with eaſe, ſenſibility, and humour upon ſubjects of general and polite converſation. I was, what in the modern phraſe is called, the agreeable Lady. With theſe advantages of nature and education, I became the hopes of all the family; their happineſs was wholly centered in me, their fortune depending upon my ſucceſs

ceſs and advancement in life. By marrying a perſon of wealth and diſtinction I might make a proviſion for the reſt, even for my beloved parents, when age and infirmities ſhould require retirement from buſineſs.

The advantages mentioned procured me ſeveral admirers, and ſuitors. In many of whom I might have been happy, had I conſidered only my ſtation in life, or a competency been thought ſufficient. A perſon of diſtinction and large fortune was wanted. The gaiety, taſte, and elegance of dreſs, unſuitable to my condition, and inconſiſtent with the circumſtances of my parents, in which I had been brought up, could not be ſupported without it. Yet I have often reflected, when we are arrayed in all the fine baubles and precious gems of the Eaſt, an inſignificant inſect, a butterfly, exceeds all the embelliſhments of art.

A RE-

A Reflection.

On the unbecoming and unſuitable Mode of Dreſs to the different Stations and Circumſtances of Life.

How is diſtinction confounded! The gentleman and the peaſant, the courtier and the cit, nearly dreſs alike. The farmer apes the Squire, the mechanic vies with the merchant. The porter of a ſhop no longer wears the foreſt cloth, and the dirty mechanic will have the ruffle ſhirt. The maſter of the family is not to be diſcerned from the ſervant. Joan, with her flaunting dreſs and ſtreamers of pride, not only paſſes for my Lady in the dark, but alſo in the light. How naſty for a waiſtcoat of lace to be wiped by the greaſy paws of a butcher. How unſeemly the double ruffles for a wench in the kitchen. Diſtinction amongſt perſons is ſo much loſt through a ſordid negligence in the great, and an intolerable

rable vanity in the little, that was it not for an awkwardneſs in the gait, a clowniſhneſs of manners, and a ſoleciſm in ſpeech, the gentleman of birth and fortune would not be known from him, whoſe hands are to adminiſter the daily and neceſſary ſupply of his wants, to keep himſelf and family from ſtarving. Magiſtrates, peers, and ſenators, ſhould always dreſs ſuitable to their place and office, if they wiſh to preſerve their authority, and reverence with the people; who are commonly affected with outward pomp and ſplendour. Wiſdom with them is lodged in the full-bottom, and greatneſs in ſhow. The Tyburn top for a ſenator, the bag for an alderman, or a ſcratch for a judge, or biſhop, are not calculated to procure reſpect and reverence. The unſuitableneſs of the dreſs with the public character, or profeſſion, produces contempt. Diſtinction ſhould be preſerved, and always ſhewn. A ſumptuary

tuary law is much wanted to oblige all perſons both to live and dreſs according to their quality and ſtation in life. Rich apparel ſuits well with the fortune and dignity of nobility, decent clothing is proper for the circumſtances and condition of mechanics. The dreſs of the one is intended for ornament and honour, of the other for uſe and defence againſt the injuries of the weather, to which they are expoſed. Tradeſmen ſhould be neat, not ſpruce; and their garments uſeful, not coſtly. The powdered and ſcented head is in character at St. James's, highly improper and unbecoming behind the counter. Warren's chicken gloves may ſuit with the delicacy of a lady of quality, not the clumſy and coarſe hands of a retailer of eggs, greens, fiſh, butter, plumbs &c. Delicate and fine clothing was never deſigned for thoſe, who are to earn their bread by the labour of their hands and the ſweat of their brows.

Many

Many of thoſe, who appear finely and delicately clad, would, like to Æſop's Jackdaw, be bald and deſpicable, if every bird was to have its own feather, that is, if every tradeſman had the different articles of dreſs and trinkets back again, which each furniſhed them with at his expence, and to the impoveriſhment of his family. We muſt ceaſe from complaining of bankruptcies, and of the numerous frauds daily practiſed, which are unavoidable, whilſt this pride and extravagance in dreſs, and the living beyond the ability of circumſtances and the ſtation of life continue; too much for the fruits of honeſt labour and induſtry to maintain and ſupport.

Your reflections, Sir, are juſt. Sad experience, ſaid the female, hath convinced me of the truth. Youth hath too much vivacity to attend to them; they learn wiſdom from experience.

The fond expectation in enriching and aggran-

aggrandizing the family ſeemed to be drawing towards a completion. A Nabob, loaded with the ſpoils of the inhabitants of the Eaſt, who had acquired a princely fortune by oppreſſion, by famine, by cruelty, or by injuſtice, appeared an humble ſuitor. Gold and equipage with fine and endearing expreſſions eaſily prevailed with, and ſubdued, a weak woman; who, Sirs, your ſex too well knows, is, what you deſcribe us to be, an animal, that delights in finery and flattery. The unhappineſs, if not the ruin, of many a credulous fair.

I liſtened to his propoſals of marriage with ſecret pleaſure; my parents accepted them with unfeigned joy. They permitted his addreſſes with the greateſt ſatisfaction, and I received them with the utmoſt complacency, thinking their wiſhes for the family intereſt to be now accompliſhed, and not entertaining the leaſt doubt of the ſincerity of his paſſion.

paſſion. Perſons, pure and innocent, who do not intend to deceive, never ſuſpect deceit.

The remark, which my father was conſtantly inculcating into the minds of his children, and was ever preſent to my thoughts, put me off my guard. Believe no man, he uſually ſaid, to be diſhoneſt, till you yourſelf ſhall ſo find him. Suſpicion may betray a mean ſpirit, yet credulity is dangerous. It is not ungenerous to diſtruſt, when the perfidy of your ſex [forgive the expreſſion] gives ſo much occaſion to fear. To my ſorrow and ſhame I found the worldly maxim to be better adapted to the preſervation of virtue and innocence, [and may every fair imprint it deeply in her heart] Deal with an honeſt man as you would with a rogue. If ſuſpicions of a man's character in other matters are ungenerous, not to ſuſpect the moſt ſolemn declarations and ſerious profeſſions of lovers is imprudent.

dent. Were our ſex thus to act, few would be your triumphs over our weakneſs, and credulity. To gain our eſteem, they might then be in reality, what they profeſs themſelves to be, our adorers and ſlaves; and we ſhould be the object of their affection, not the deſire of their luſt. A ſtop was put to the narrative, the Curate being obliged to attend upon a funeral.

The next morning I expected the Parſon, knowing his curious and inquiſitive temper. Not coming, I took a walk. In paſſing through a village, a few miles from the cottage, I obſerved at a diſtance a large aſſembly of people, attending, as I found upon approaching nearer, to the gibberiſh of a quack doctor. Theſe weak and ignorant men do great hurt amongſt the lower claſs, who are ſilly enough to purchaſe and take their medicines. Before I came he had diſpoſed of a large quantity of infallible medicines, which,

which, if ſimple and innocent, as pretended, the impoſition might be unnoticed, [for if the vulgar will be deceived, let them be deceived] but the loſs of limbs, ſometimes the life of the patient, ſhew their unſkilfulneſs in the application, and their ignorance of the nature and quality of the drugs, they adminiſter. I immediately went to a neighbouring magiſtrate, got a warrant, and carried him before his worſhip. Upon a promiſe of leaving the county he was diſſmiſed. He pretended to be a foreigner, and to have ſtudied under the famous Boerheave. We could not ſay, which aſtoniſhed moſt, his ignorance or impudence, for he could neither write, nor read.

On Quacks.

The daily increaſe of quacks is an alarming and convincing proof of the increaſe of vice; the one not more hurtful to the morals, than the other per-

pernicious to the conſtitution, of the people. The promiſe of ſafety, ſecurity, and a cheap remedy, which operate ſtrongly with the weakneſs and credulity of the vulgar, who are ready to take any thing, which may give a momentary eaſe, encourages the commiſſion of folly. It is unknown, how many lives are annually loſt, and conſtitutions deſtroyed, by the ignorance and impudence of quacks, both foreign and domeſtic, whoſe number, from the prevalency of vice, is daily increaſing. They are not leſs numerous than the diſorders and diſeaſes incident to the human body, for every one of which there is a medical pretender, and a particular infallible noſtrum: ſo that it would ſeem to be impoſſible, if the patient applies in time, whatever the complaint or malady is, if incurable, to die under their hands. Theſe vagrants, who cannot in their own country procure bread for their porridge,

and

and come over in tattered garments, are ſoon clad through the good nature and credulous diſpoſition of the Engliſh in embroidery, and have an equipage. The advertiſing quacks at home are not leſs ſucceſsful, and grow rich by the ſame means. How do I pity the unexperienced youth, who, relying on the pleaſing yet deluſive promiſe of theſe itinerant phyſicians, live not half their days; whoſe conſtitutions through the poiſonous medicines are daily conſuming, and withering away. If the college of phyſicians have not, it is high time, that the legiſlature had inveſted them with, ſufficient authority to ſuppreſs quackery, on account of the amazing havock and deſolation it ſpreads in every part of the kingdom, particularly the metropolis. Theſe blundering pretenders to phyſic ſhould not be permitted to exerciſe their diabolical arts with impunity. It is not leſs neceſſary for the reſtoration of

health, that the drugs uſed in medicine ſhould be good, than the diſpenſers of them be ſkilful. If that learned body have a right to examine the one, why not to approve the ability of the other? Not the parents alone ſuffer through quackeries, but an innocent and helpleſs offſpring inherit from them a debilitated, ſhattered, and broken conſtitution. The fear of a diſcovery often prevents the commiſſion of vice; the flattering hope of ſecurity is an incitement to practiſe it. Men are not always virtuous from principle; the dread of the bad conſequences of folly frequently keep them honeſt. Remove the apprehenſions of danger, and the ſaint in appearance will become the libertine in reality. Of the prevalency of debauchery no one wants information. The public ſtreets at every hour of the day are crowded with proſtitutes. The quack's bills, ſtuck up at every private place, and daily diſtributed in

the public ſtreets of the metropolis, and indeed at every market-town and village of note throughout the kingdom, by removing the apprehenſion of danger, and promiſing ſafety, are an inducement to thoughtleſs youth to tranſgreſs. Theſe inſtruments of ſeduction ſhould not be permitted. The magiſtrate ſhould have them deſtroyed. The progreſs of a vice, ſo long the diſgrace of the police, and the diſhonour of the national religion, would by that means receive a check, and quacks would return to their former indigence and obſcurity, or be obliged to acquire a livelihood from honeſt and decent employments.

A Converſation.

The curate called the next day at the cottage, and excuſed himſelf, ſaying, that he had been engaged in compoſing a ſermon. I told him, that he need not be in any diſtreſs for the future

future, becauſe I could furniſh him from town with a number for his life, was he to live to the age of Methuſelah, at one penny each, of the moſt learned and able divines.

He thanked me, and added, Though I have no opinion of my own compoſition in preference to writers of eſtabliſhed reputation and of the moſt exalted ſtations, I ſhall ever conſult the good of my hearers, who, being plain ſimple folk, can neither attend to, nor underſtand, their arguments. Beſides, I think it more conſiſtent with the duty of a preacher to ſpeak the language of his own heart, however poor and mean the ſtile, than to preach the ſentiments of others, the truth and conſiſtency of which with the ſacred writers required conſiderable time, ſtrict attention, and cloſe application to examine, being the work of labour, erudition, and ſtudy.

I replied, If I am not miſtaken, the preaching of the ſermons of eminent divines had been frequently recommended to acquire an uſeful and proper mode of writing.

You are right, Sir, anſwered the Parſon, yet this excellent preſcription hath been productive of indolence, inſtead of exciting a ſpirit of emulation in compoſition; and compoſition hath been abſorbed in tranſcription. What able defenders of the truths of Chriſtianity againſt their ſubtle and learned adverſaries muſt thoſe gentleman make, who neither read, nor write, nor think, for themſelves! Weightier arguments than have appeared in its defence cannot, I admit, be offered, nor better ſermons made, than have been wrote, and printed, yet the taſte and manners of every age being different, the ſtile and mode of addreſs muſt vary to be pleaſing, inſtructive, and edifying. The controverſial ſermons

mons in a William's reign will be unſuitable in a George's. The farrago of nonſenſe under the republican government is more pleaſing. The witty ſermons of a South read well in the cloſet, are not adapted to the modern pulpit. Wiſdom is acquired by intenſe ſtudy, and a purity of ſtile by frequent writing. The young divine therefore will do well to keep to his own notes, which will qualify him in time to leave the ruſtic villa, and to make a figure in the polite neighbourhood of St. James's.

The old man interrupted, ſaying, You entertain an extraordinary high opinion of the utility of ſermons. It would have been of more benefit to the underſtanding of mankind, not leſs to the peace of ſociety, had there been leſs of preaching, and more of praying. Your city of London, if I am not miſinformed, abounds with preachers of righteouſneſs; and the

religion of Jeſus is ſo differently taught, and variouſly explained by its miniſters, that I am not ſurpriſed at the increaſe and progreſs of infidelity, and that men will go their own way to Heaven, when from the contradictory notions eſpouſed, and delivered with zeal and confidence for ſacred truths, they know not what to believe, and to practiſe. Every ſect hath a Pope in its belly. They are all equally, and alike, infallible. Truth, What modeſty! is ſolely lodged with them. The liberty of thinking, which they claim to themſelves, and aſſert, that they have a natural and abſolute right to, they will not allow to others. They bind others with thoſe chains, from which they ſet themſelves free. There may be hypocrites in praying, but prayers make neither enthuſiaſts, heretics, nor atheiſts. Can you ſay, Rev. Sir, the ſame of preaching, and religious controverſies, which have deluged Chriſtendom

dom with a ſea of blood? I am a ſimple man, and, though I have not more underſtanding than, I will never put an implicit faith in, my teachers. I believe my ſalvation ſafe, notwithſtanding I may differ from you reverend and learned doctors. I will read and judge for myſelf. When the prayers are read, not coldly, nor negligently, nor ſuperciliouſly, but with a becoming ſerioufneſs, reverence, and piety, I am perfectly ſatisfied; I want nothing more. When the parſon hath named his text, I mean no reflecti n on his parts, or ſuſpect his good intention, I ſhould, if decency permitted, immediately withdraw.

I commend, ſaid the P.rſon, the noble exertion of the freedom, you have, to read and judge for yourſelf. The Bible is the beſt ſermon, and honeſty in reading it and applying its ſ. cred truths to the heart, the beſt parſon. Keep to your Bible. The moſt pious

and learned are not to be truſted; they have greatly erred in matters of doctrine and precept. Reſign up your conſcience to no man, notwithſtanding the ſanctified look, and the warm zeal expreſſed for the glory and honour of God. Read the ſcripture for yourſelf, and you will never embrace error and falſhood for the words of truth and ſoberneſs. Was every man to follow the laudable example, and, like the Bereans of old, examined the ſcriptures to ſee, whether things are ſo, or not, [and he certainly ought, becauſe his eternal welfare is particularly intereſted in the inquiry,] innovators in religion would not meet with much ſucceſs; which ariſes from inattention, indifference, and negligence in this matter. Doctrines are imbibed without a due examination, and the dictates of various preachers are received with implicit credulity by their reſpective admirers. I put an end to the religious converſation by requeſting

requeſting the unfortunate female to proceed in her ſtory.

It will not, I hope, Sirs, be thought an improper digreſſion from the ſubject to give you a deſcription of the Nabob's character, you will not therefore be ſurpriſed at the villainous attempt upon my honour.

Nabob's Character.

His addreſs was engaging, behaviour polite, perſon amiable. His wit and humour made him the deſirable and agreeable companion with the men, his condeſcending and pliant temper recommended him to the eſteem of the women. Theſe advantages favoured his baſe intentions on the virtue of the innocent fair.

It was his conſtant practice to corrupt and debauch, whenever the eaſy and credulous fair afforded an opportunity; and, when the brutal paſſion was gratified, he never ſaw the object

more, but abandoned her to all the miſeries of deſertion, and proſtitution. Every day he had ſome new face, his fortune being immenſe. He exceeded even a Solomon in his luſt, and a Sultan in his miſtreſſes. No woman, whom he fancied, ſingle or married, eſcaped him, whom, either by his perſuaſive tongue [for he had the tongue of the charmer] he could prevail with, or by his generous preſents allure, to ſatisfy his luſt. To carry on an intrigue he ſurpaſſed even a ſaint in piety, and, when he had accompliſhed his deſign, he cared not, who knew him to be the villain. Such was my adorer, and lover. Such the powerful adverſary I had to engage and contend with.

You, Gentlemen, I know, look upon it to be no crime, a meer act of gallantry, to deceive the artleſs and unſuſpecting fair by preſents of trinkets, and the alluring promiſe of never-ceaſ-

ing

ing love; and, when you have gratified your luſt, how cruel and ungenerous! you take a pleaſure in expoſing, not in concealing, our frailty and weakneſs. I do not, however, think the crime of ſeduction to be leſs, than the deflowering a virgin by force. Preſumptuous and premeditated ſins are in reaſon, what you know, Rev. Sir, they are in religion, and ought to be in law, more heinous, and leſs pardonable, than ſins committed without any previous thought and deſign, through the violence of the paſſion, or the ſuddenneſs of the temptation. If the perjured villain was obliged by law either to provide for, or to marry, the object of his luſt, matrimony would ſoon grow into repute, and the public ſtreets of the metropolis would not be thronged with harlots.

Were gallants, ſaid the old man, who are conſtant only to inconſtancy, and pretend fidelity to a ſingle woman

to be a kind of matrimony, obliged by law to keep their miſtreſſes, till death diſſolved the union, [ſuch an obligation having the dreadful appearance of matrimonial bondage] they would be alike indifferent to the love of a pretty wench, or an homely wife. Confinement is a torment to the gay libertine. Lothario cannot be conſtant, for luſt through cuſtom becomes ſo predominant, that he is enamoured with every new face he ſees, and can no more reſt, till the inordinate deſire is gratified, than a moth can forbear to burn his wings at the ſight of a candle. This obligation to conſtancy with the miſtreſs would be a check to the free indulgence of the ſenſual appetites. His luſt, if not ſatiated, muſt through neceſſity be at an end; for, however conſiderable the fortune is, it could not ſupport a licentious and uncontrouled gratification.

A Vin-

A Vindication of the Unfortunate Fair.

Hear me, Sirs, with patience and candour a few words, not in juſtification of the ſin, but to extenuate the guilt, and ſoften the perſecution, *of the ſeduced part* of our ſex. Theſe unfortunate creatures are compelled by the cruel deſertion of parents, the want of the neceſſaries of life, and the inability to procure them by labour and ſervitude, [for who will employ them?] to ſeek a meer ſupport of life by yielding themſelves up a prey to luſt. You muſt pity the melancholy condition of thoſe, who, to humour, to pleaſe, and to gratify the deſires of your perverſe, inconſtant, deceitful ſex, are continually expoſed to poverty, to diſeaſe, to infamy. Though deſpiſed *by their own*, and the ſlaves of brutal luſt *to your ſex*, they are not loſt to repentance. The greateſt of villains may

may feel remorſe, be touched with the ſenſe of his crimes, and amend the error of his ways. *They* are not at times without their feelings, and muſt wiſh, I am perſuaded, moſt ſincerely to be releaſed from the horrors and miſeries of an abandoned life. But, alas! Sirs, who will befriend and aſſiſt the good intention and pious reſolution? With whom ſhall they find the Chriſtian ſpirit of benevolence to forgive the follies and indiſcretions of youth? Was you Rev. Sir, to offer aſſiſtance, would you not fear for your character? You cannot have forgot the Squire's reflection. Their very ſeducers, inſtead *of declining*, will be the firſt, to ſtone them to death, to hide *their own ſhame*. Yet, if the modeſt and virtuous hypocrites of the age could be perſuaded to lay their hand on their breaſt, they would commiſerate their wretched condition, and not add to the troubles and misfortunes of the deluded

deluded creatures by encouraging a ſpirit of perſecution againſt them, who by lending a favourable ear to man's flattering and bewitching tongue have loſt their virtue and peace for ever. If the libertine forſakes his follies, he recovers the loſt character, and is even had in honour. Not ſo woman; ſhe by one falſe ſtep [a curſe on the ſeducer's head!] is undone, and for ever; her innocence is never to be regained. O! how unfortunate is the condition of our ſex, who for *one* miſcarriage are contemned *by their own*, and deſerted *by the other, ſex.* The baſe perfidious betrayers of our virtue ſhall revel in debaucheries, and enjoy the eſteem and reſpect of the man of worth, their honour not tarniſhed, and their credit ſafe; whilſt poor weak woman is left to ſuffer the diſtreſs and miſeries of a licentious profligate life. Excuſe, Gentlemen, this ſerious digreſſion. I

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wiſh there had been none occaſion for the making it.

The Parſon added, I lament the fate of theſe unhappy creatures. All the follies and wickedneſs, which they commit, and are the cauſe of committing in others, lie at the door *of the firſt corruptors*. What a weight of guilt muſt be upon his mind, who *by one ſeduction* becomes the author of ſuch a complicated ſcene of diſtreſs, poverty, miſery, and wretchedneſs; alſo of diſhoneſty, intemperance, uncleanneſs, and ſometimes murder. No man ſurely, who will allow himſelf to think, would purchaſe the momentary enjoyment of brutiſh pleaſure at ſuch an extravagant rate. The man, who ſeriouſly reflects upon this, will ſurely forego the gratification of his luſt, and be induced to become the friend, rather than the betrayer, of beauty and innocence. Serious reflections however

make

make no part of the debauchee's character; they come not before the power of gratification is over, when infirmity and diſeaſe have laid him on the bed of ſickneſs and death, and the gay libertine becomes the deſpairing penitent. The intriguing villain may then think, [though too late to make ſatisfaction to the injured parties] that it was a crime to have corrupted the fidelity of a wife, or debauched the virtue of a daughter.

Fortunate would it have been for me, ſaid the female, had Mr. —— entertained ſuch ſerious reflections, but repeated acts of profligacy and licentiouſneſs had ſeared his conſcience, and made him averſe to every good thought, and virtuous action.

A Converſation.

The narrative was interrupted by the coming of the newſman with the weekly paper for the Parſon, who in reading

reading took notice of an article concerning the ſociety of London reformers, who in conjunction with the magiſtrates had laudably diſtinguiſhed themſelves in preventing and ſuppreſſing the profanation of the ſabbath, and had made ſeveral examples of hair-dreſſers, butchers, apple-women, &c. for exerciſing their reſpective callings on that day. The Parſon highly commended their holy zeal for the honour of God, and hoped it would meet with the encouragement and applauſe of every good man, and true friend of religion.

The old man ſmiled, and ſaid, It was an odd kind of piety and devotion for a man to neglect *his* religious obſervance of the ſabbath, which he himſelf acknowledges to be his indiſpenſable duty, and to traverſe up and down the ſtreets of the metropolis, to inſiſt upon others obſervance, nay more, to compel them by the dread of pains and penalties

penalties to obſerve it. Conſcience you know, Rev. Sir, is free. It owns no power above it, nor can be controuled by any, but God. In religious matters, where perſonal ſalvation is concerned, it can be under none other direction and government than his revealed word. If the ſenſe of God's goodneſs cannot influence and diſpoſe a man to obſerve the ſabbath, for which neglect he alone will be anſwerable, he ſhould not be forced contrary to his inclination and will, to avoid puniſhment, or a fine [for true devotion is the offspring of love, not fear, and compulſion is not reaſon, nor perſecution religion] to obſerve it. What merit, Rev. Sir, in plaguing, haraſſing, and diſtreſſing a ſet of poor ignorant wretches, incapable of making reſiſtance, and whoſe wickedneſs from the mean and deplorable ſtation in life can only hurt themſelves, not affect others. The overturning the gaming-tables,

putting

putting down the ordinaries in the villages adjacent to the metropolis, and ſhutting up the taverns at the polite end of the town, would I apprehend be doing of eſſential ſervice to ſociety, not leſs to the intereſt of religion.

I ſaid to the Parſon, You country folk ſell rolls, fleſh, and greens on every ſabbath day, and no notice is taken, no offence given, and no crime committed. Why, Rev. Sir, ſhould you think theſe things to be ſinful and criminal in the Londoners, and commend *our magiſtrates* for doing, what you would condemn *in your juſtices*, to wit, the puniſhing ſuch delinquents? I know of no commandment againſt, but the laws of nature and reaſon plead ſtrongly for, the ſale of fleſh on Sundays in the exceſſive hot days of ſummer, before the time of divine ſervice. We are to reſt from bodily labour, but it is no where ſaid, thou ſhalt not eat, nor drink, on the ſabbath day; it is a

feſtival,

feſtival, not a faſt: nor do I think tainted lamb and veal more nutritious and wholeſome, than ſour milk and ſtinking mackerel. Why then ſhould the ſale *of the one* be permitted, and *of the other* be forbidden? Poultry are killed and fiſh caught in the country on a Sunday to regale the luxurious appetite of the wealthy and great. I believe, Parſon, you thought it to be no crime, when you ſaid grace at the Squire's on Sunday laſt. Why then ſhould it be deemed unlawful to ſell, *even to kill*, in the metropolis, a few lambs and calves to furniſh an wholeſome family dinner for the mechanic and tradeſman? Let us not be zealous about trifles, and neglect the weightier matters of the law. Let the magiſtrates go round the adjacent villages on a Sunday, and obſerve the drunkenneſs, debauchery and profaneneſs. To ſuppreſs the numerous houſes, which encourage this wickedneſs, will diſplay a true

concern

concern for the good of the community, and to let the poor [who ſeldom receive their wages before the dawn of the ſabbath] have a comfortable meal will ſhew their humanity. May I not add, their chriſtianity? The ſober and induſtrious tradeſman, who prefers decency and regularity *at home* to diſorder and riot *abroad*, will alſo hold himſelf obliged *to them*. An old commentator tells me, that St. Peter's viſion [Acts 10] happened on a Sunday, when he was bid, go, riſe, kill, and eat. But viſions apart, let us come to realities. The ſabbath was made for man, not man for the ſabbath; ſo ſaith the founder of our religion. The ſenſe of the words is clear without a comment. Let us ſhew, that we underſtand it, by our practice. I think, Parſon, after giving a ſweet ſermon, it would not be pleaſing to ſit down to an unſavoury dinner.

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The approach of a footman, with a card of invitation to the Parſon from a neighbouring Squire, put an end to the converſation, which began to grow ſerious. The Parſon ſeemed to be ruffled, that the old man and I differed with him in ſentiments. Though we equally wiſhed the ſtrict and devout obſervance of the ſabbath, we did not approve of the perſons, who without any lawful authority enforced it; who blended the laudable and reſpectable character of reformers with the infamy and odium of informers.

The Parſon was on good terms with the country gentry, and received frequent invitations, being a gentleman of good underſtanding, and entertaining wit. He had introduced me to ſeveral houſes, where, on account of the intimacy between us, I had an equal and friendly welcome with himſelf. We were both cordially received by the Squire and his lady, whoſe ſons

were

were juſt returned from a country boarding ſchool for the holidays.

After dinner I took the liberty of aſking the young gentlemen, what books they read, and with the permiſſion of the father examined them. O! ſhameful to relate, how ignorant and illiterate! They read Horace and Virgil, and were entire ſtrangers to the grammar; they could not apply, nor explain, even a common rule in ſyntax. The ſurpriſe ceaſed on taking up a volume of the Spectator, and deſiring them to read a number. From the defects in claſſical learning, I did not expect, that they would underſtand the ſenſe of the writer; but aſtoniſhing! a word of five ſyllables was Greek, they attempted to ſpell it, read in a moſt horrible tone, and never made a ſingle ſtop. Obſerving the parents tears ſtealing from their eyes, who had been made to expect great things from the forward and brilliant parts of the youths,

youths, I immediately cloſed the book, and ſat down. It is impoſſible to expreſs the feelings and vexation of the father at the diſappointment, and the uneaſineſs and concern of the children, who wiſhed to be out of the room, being fearful, that they had incurred the diſpleaſure of the good man, for what was owing to the inattention and inability of the maſter, [who upon inquiry had been an exciſeman, had no knowledge of letters, and gave his inſtructions from tranſlations] not to their indolence and negligence.

To put an end to that anxiety and grief viſible in the countenance of the parents, and to relieve the poor children, who ſtood bluſhing with ſhame at their ignorance, and trembling for fear of chaſtiſement, I addreſſed myſelf to the Curate, ſaying, Sir, you ſee the unhappy ſituation both of parents and children. I know you

reſpect the one, and love the other, and they are deſerving of it; afford them your aſſiſtance, till they can be fixed with proper maſters, if you chooſe not to commence the private tutor. He readily conſented upon the promiſe of granting a future requeſt, when he ſhould have occaſion to make it, and the Squire without any inconvenience could grant it. The father with tears of joy complied, and thanked him, and the children, falling on their knees, begged his pardon, aſſuring him, that it was not their fault; which I confirmed, by ſaying, that my friend would in a few days convince him of that truth. The prediction was happily completed. A fortunate event for the youths, whoſe fortunes would have furniſhed none other happineſs, than what would have ariſen from the company and converſation of fools and blockheads.

On Boarding-ſchools.

The happineſs of life depending much upon the education and principles perſons receive in their youth, the morals and qualifications of public teachers ſhould undergo a ſtrict examination. They ſhould not be permitted to execute that important truſt without a ſpecial licence from the Ordinary. This excellent plan was intended to have been executed by that worthy prelate Dr. Hayter, Biſhop of London, whoſe ſudden death prevented it. Something ſeems neceſſary to be done by the prelates of the church, who have the power of examining, to ſilence the numerous pretenders to literature, who hang out in every ſtreet and lane in the metropolis, and every village in the country, a board to qualify young gentlemen for trade, the counting houſe, and the univerſity. One of whom had the modeſty to write

over his door, *All languages taught here*, who upon inquiry did not underſtand *one*. None, but able maſters, who want not to receive inſtruction, would under this regulation undertake the office. Real merit would be encouraged. Literary quacks would not ſteal the rewards due to men of ability and character, and dunces be compelled to earn ſubſiſtence from drudgery and labour, for which nature and dulneſs deſigned them. Youth alſo would be properly educated, and the parents expectations anſwered. It is not in the little, but great boarding-ſchools, wherein the ſons of peers and ſenators receive their education, that defects in the education of youth are to be found. The general neglect of inſtructing youth in the knowledge of the Engliſh tongue is aſtoniſhing. Hence it is, that youth, who are able to compoſe with eaſe and elegance a theme or declamation in Greek and Latin, converſe and write incorrectly

incorrectly in Engliſh. I knew a peer, who occupied a principal department in the ſtate, that could not write a common letter, even a meſſage card, free from grammatical errors, and what is worſe, bad ſpelling. No wonder, when the maſter was equally negligent, we muſt not ſay ignorant who in the compaſs of twelve lines wrote the word *bottles* three times wrong *bootels*, and *boteels*. The Engliſh claſſics ſhould be read with the Greek and Latin, the one being an ornament to the gentleman, the other uſeful to the man.

Whilſt at breakfaſt I received a letter from the worthy Curate, containing ſundry reflections, which he had wrote down upon his return home from the viſit, on the preſent erroneous method of educating youth, to which he aſcribed in a great meaſure the general corruption of manners, which we all complain of; and every good man wiſhes

to have corrected. How far he may be right in his conjecture, is left to the candour of the reader to determine. The remarks, though ſerious and religious, if pertinent and juſt, will not I hope, loſe their merit, nor prove unacceptable. He obſerved in his letter, that we had agreed in a former converſation, that both town and country were ſufficiently wicked, and wanted to be reformed, but we had not mentioned the cauſe of this wickedneſs, nor pointed out a mode of reformation. You lamented, ſaid the Parſon, the abuſes of a learned education at the Squire's, but forgot to notice the neglect of a religious education. The yawning over a few prayers morning and evening, with a Latin tranſlation of a Sunday's collect, is all the ſacred knowledge communicated; ſoon learnt, and, upon quitting ſchool for buſineſs, in a little time laid aſide, and forgotten. Youth come abroad into life entirely unacquainted

unacquainted with the deſign of Chriſtianity, and have nothing more to prove, that they are Chriſtians, than the being born in a country, where Chriſtianity is the profeſſed and eſtabliſhed religion. Charity children know more of religion than thoſe, who have received their education at boarding-ſchools.

The Parſon on Education.

When we conſider, how children are in general brought up, vice and ignorance muſt prevail in the world, and the profligacy and licentiouſneſs of the times are readily accounted for. The moſt infamous, even unnatural, ſins are daily committed. Fraud, theft, ſuicide, murder, and what ſhocks human nature, are common. We are not at a loſs for the cauſe. The bulk of the people conſiſts of them, who have received no religious education, or whoſe religious education hath been neglected in their youth. Is it poſſible

therefore to prevent the fatal conſequences of a vicious inclination in perſons, who have been brought up without the knowledge of good, and evil? I confeſs indeed, that the ſins mentioned have been committed by perſons of diſtinguiſhed rank, learning, underſtanding, and character: principally owing to the neglect of laying the foundation of piety and virtue in their tender years, which would have corrected the vicious diſpoſition of their nature, and which from ſuch neglect grew up with them, increaſed, and at the laſt overwhelmed them. The knowledge of religion is a ſecondary concern with the wealthy and great in the education of their children. They are inſtructed in ſuch arts and ſciences, as may be neceſſary for the different callings or profeſſions they are deſigned, inſtead of having their manners formed, and a right bias given to their inclinations. To this neglect we are to aſcribe

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the diſſipation, pride, luxury, and incontinency of the great, and the paſſion for gaiety, dreſs, pleaſure, and expence amongſt the middling claſs of people. Whilſt this mode of education continues, we muſt not look for true Chriſtianity and ſubſtantial virtue; our religion will be meer profeſſion; our goodneſs, ſhow. To reform therefore the preſent age, and to make the next wiſer and better, a different mode of education muſt be adopted, and that, which is now *the leaſt*, and *the laſt*, with many *no concern at all*, ſhould be the principal object, the inſtructing youth in the knowledge of the holy ſcriptures, from the inſtant we diſcover any reaſon. The principal error is not entering upon the education early enough. From the time of their birth children exhibit ſome ſigns, of what they will be, when they are grown up. A ſkilful gardener will tell you from the buds of his trees, what fruit they will

produce; ſo an attentive parent may diſcover from the actions of their infant children, whether they have a tendency to be virtuous, or vicious. Ill diſpoſitions ſoon ſpring up, and, unleſs ſpeedily corrected, will be formed into habits. At the moſt precious part of their lives their conduct is not minded, ſo that their innocency is loſt, and their hearts are corrupted at the time, when the parent is beginning to think of their education. Before the age of ſeven all their actions are looked upon to be ſimple and innocent, nay, we even encourage them in their faults, by applauding and excuſing, inſtead of reproving and correcting them. Anger in children we call ſpirit; ſtubbornneſs, reſolution; tricking and lying, cunning and wiſdom. Thus bad habits are contracted even without our obſerving them; and before children have attained to the above age, they have imbibed principles, which it will be difficult,

difficult, if poſſible, ever to get rid of. Children, who appear at that age to be paſſionate, revengeful, cruel, fond of liquor, or gluttonous, do ſeldom, when arrived at years of diſcretion, turn out meek, temperate, humane, affable, and courteous. They ſhould never be permitted to do, what they liſt, and to gratify their paſſions and appetites without controul. By this means they become obſtinate and independent, and will follow the dictates of their own perverſe will, not the ſage and prudent council of the indulgent, but miſtaken, parents. Experience confirms the love of the body to be the root of all vices. The ſeeds of intemperance, pride, and uncleanneſs, through the fooliſh fondneſs of parents, are plentifully ſown in childhood. Inſtead of ſimple diet and plain clothing, which would ſtrengthen the conſtitution, prevent diſeaſes, render labour agreeable, and create an averſion to

ſenſual pleaſures; they are fed daintily, and clothed delicately; they are bred up in gluttony and vanity from the cradle; the fatal conſequences of which are, when arrived at years of maturity, they give themſelves up to bodily pleaſures, and the gratification of their ſenſual appetites; they are effeminate, proud, luxurious, and intemperate. Can we then wonder at the pride, laſciviouſneſs, luxury, and foppery of the age, when the foundation of theſe evils is laid in infancy? How can we complain of the want of true piety and real devotion, when youth have been brought up in ſenſuality and luſt. Inſtead of children being inſtructed in the neceſſary and comfortable truths of religion, [if they have any religious inſtruction] they are more frequently taught the tenets and doctrines of their particular ſect, or profeſſion, which they have not the capacity of underſtanding, learning a confuſed medley of notions,

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tending to no ſort of edification, and having no influence upon piety; and which, if not altogether uſeleſs, will not make them wiſe unto ſalvation; more probably endanger it, by inſtilling into them pride, and uncharitableneſs towards thoſe, who differ from them, and by receiving for neceſſary articles of faith the private ſentiments of man. Were children made acquainted with the ſaving truths of the Goſpel, which they may eaſily be; for they are ſuited to all men's capacity, and lie open to the eyes of all men, crimes, which reflect diſhonour on the faith of an heathen, would not be common and familiar in an age ſo enlightened, and in a country profeſſing the purity of the Chriſtian faith. It is wiſhed for the good of the community, not leſs for the happineſs of individuals, that youth ſent to the univerſity received with claſſical *religious* inſtructions. If they are omitted, we cannot wonder, that perſons left to themſelves.

themſelves, when they are moſt ſuſceptible of bad impreſſions, and living in a ſtate of independence, when they are very unfit to regulate their conduct, reading looſe and immoral authors, which raiſes impure ideas and excites vicious deſires, ſhould turn out libertines. If children were taught, that the practice of piety and virtue was the eſſential character of the true Chriſtian, and thoroughly convinced of the neceſſity of moral virtues and the certainty of future rewards and puniſhments, there would not be ſo many looſe and diſorderly Chriſtians. Children are not ſo dull and refractory, but, by gentleneſs, and adapting the inſtructions given to their age and capacity, they might be made to underſtand religion, and be induced both by inclination and pleaſure to practiſe its morality. We daily ſee children, with little pains and labour, performing amazing feats of dexterity; and making a rapid progreſs in arts,

ſciences,

ſciences, and every kind of literature and manufacture. It is not therefore, that the knowledge of religion is more difficult to be attained, or out of the reach of their underſtanding; but they, whoſe duty and buſineſs it is, will not inſtruct them, or they themſelves will not ſeriouſly attend to it.

A Converſation.

The Squire, accompanied with the Parſon, called in the evening at the cottage. I fortunately happened to be at home. I invited him to partake of our ſimple entertainment, which he very friendly accepted. After ſupper *the Squire ſaid*, the news-paper [pulling it out of his pocket] ſpeaks of a great change ſoon to take place in the miniſtry. May it be for the better! The truly diſintereſted and patriotic ſervant however is not eaſily found.

It hath been the misfortune of former kings, *ſaid the Parſon*, to diſmiſs the officers

ficers of ſtate through the cabals of their diſappointed or excluded rivals, when, by being perfect maſters of their buſineſs, they might have received conſiderable advantages from their ſervices. The diſtractions and parties occaſioned by the frequent changes of men and meaſures, which rendered the public proceedings uncertain, created uneaſineſs to the ſovereign, and endangered the ſafety of the people, are now expiring through the ſteadineſs of the prince, in giving permanency to the miniſtry.

This conduct in the ſovereign, *ſaid the Squire*, will remove a national reproach. From the frequent changes in the miniſtry, the French have hitherto looked upon us to be a fickle and inconſtant people. This behaviour of former princes gave riſe to that remarkable ſarcaſm of the famous Prince of Condé, who, upon the arrival of every mail from England, uſed to aſk,

who

who was ſecretary of ſtate in England *by that poſt?*

From the clamours raiſed and encouraged againſt the miniſters, *I replied*, [exceptionable, becauſe they are miniſters, whoſe predeceſſors in office were *equally*, and their ſucceſſors will not be *leſs exceptionable*, before their exaltation *eſteemed*, and their abilities, not to ſay *patriotiſm*, *extolled*,] I fear for the ſteadineſs of the ſovereign.

I ſee nothing more, *ſaid the old man*, in aſperſing the ſovereign, [*not lawful from a fellow to his equal*,] exclaiming againſt the miniſtry, and extolling patriotiſm, than this, If the king and miniſtry had places, penſions, and titles enough to gratify the pride, the avarice, the ambition, or the neceſſity of theſe mighty defenders and protectors of the people's rights and liberties, how good and gracious would the ſovereign be, how wiſe and juſt his miniſters. The one would be proclaimed the good father,

ther, and the other ſtiled the faithful guardians of the people.

We have ſeen enough, *anſwered the Parſon*, of patriotiſm, to make the people diffident of its warmeſt friends, and to convince them, that with the love of the country is blended the perſonal intereſt of the man. A place, penſion, or title, [for every man, as ſaid Robert, hath his price] will ſilence the boldeſt declaimer, and in an inſtant transform the enthuſiaſtic patriot into the moſt obſequious courtier. Did a Pitt conſider it any diſgrace to his popularity to receive a title and penſion? Did a P—— conceive his integrity to be injured by being created a peer with a reverſionary grant from the crown for his ſon? *The miniſterial and patriotic band are in this agreed*, however they may differ in political matters, *not to ſerve their King and country for nought.* It would be a conſiderable ſaving to the public, were theſe penſions and grants

grants diſcontinued. If not, let them be given to thoſe, who have long and faithfully ſerved their country, and really want them; not to ſuch, who have acquired an honourable maintenance from the emoluments of office, or who quit it without the plea of incapacity and infirmity, or from private diſguſt will no longer hold it for the public good.

His Majeſty, *anſwered the Squire*, hath been rudely charged with cheriſhing profligacy and debauchery. His profeſſed enemies generouſly confeſs, that he is a virtuous prince. Can ſuch a prince *countenance*, much more *cheriſh*, profligacy and debauchery? For political reaſons he may be compelled to employ ſome perſons of extraordinary abilities, whoſe characters, no more than yours, or mine, will bear a rigid ſcrutiny. If Lord —— is a debauchee, and Earl —— a common ſwearer. Did his Majeſty encourage profaneneſs, when the

latter

latter was in adminiſtration? Why debauchery by a continuance of the former? We ſhall forbear drawing an invidious compariſon between the private virtues and vices *of the preſent*, and *the late* [or *any*] officers of ſtate. The places, not the characters, are the cauſe of diſcontent. Antipathy to government ariſes from an excluſion in adminiſtration. Claimants to royal favour *in their own opinion*, who are *out*, will not be ſatiſfied, till they are *in*. Hence the public meaſures are declaimed againſt and obſtructed; are undermined and counteracted by the ſecret machinations of rivals for power. If any departments in the ſtate are improperly filled by repreſentatives, why do not conſtituents ſhew their reſentment? The re-electing them is an acknowledgment of their ability, an approbation of their conduct, and a commendation of the ſovereign's appointment.

I cannot

I cannot learn from your converſation, *ſaid the old man*, what is the difference between Miniſterialiſm and Patriotiſm, the zealots of either party being alike venal and proſtitute. The loyalty of the one towards the ſovereign, and the love of the other for his country, originate and terminate in the gratification of private ambition and perſonal intereſt. I am therefore of opinion, though my opinion is of no public conſequence in this humble ſituation, that the œconomy and wiſdom of the King are to be applauded, for not changing the miniſtry, when the nation labours under the preſſure of heavy taxes, and the poorer ſort of his ſubjects are ſtarving.

You are right, old man, *replied the Squire*. For what will be the conſequence of a change? The hungry and needy ſucceſſors in office will only add to, and increaſe, the diſtreſs of the public. They, like to their rapacious predeceſſors,

predeceſſors, muſt be complimented with places, penſions, and reverſionary grants for themſelves, families, and friends; otherwiſe the public will be left to take care of itſelf, and the King may do his own buſineſs.

I agree with you, Sir, *I anſwered*; adding, that it was prudent advice in Walpole to George the Second, not to liſten to the clamours of the multitude [and they were equally boiſterous and vehement in thoſe days] for a change in the miniſtry; becauſe your Majeſty will be conſiderably the loſer, and the public revenue hurt, by making a proviſion for a continual ſucceſſion of beggars. The advice is now ſeaſonable, and I wiſh it may be followed by his preſent Majeſty, in keeping the miniſtry *in*, and the patriots *out*, who have neceſſities to be ſupplied.

The Parſon, pulling out his watch, ſaid, it grows late. Let us finiſh the ſubject; for, if we were to diſcourſe to the

the day of the reſurrection, we ſhall never convince *the patriots*, that *the miniſtry are honeſt*; nor *the miniſtry*, that *the patriots are diſintereſted.*

The old man cloſed the converſation by ſhaking his head, *and ſaying*, In what a comfortleſs and pitiable ſituation are the King and the good people of England, who can put no truſt, nor confidence, either in patriots, or miniſters?

The Parſon coming in the morning, the female at my requeſt proceeded with her ſtory. Being conſtantly in the company of Mr. —— at all places of public reſort, his chariot continually waiting at the door, and himſelf frequently engaged in converſation with my father in the ſhop, I paſſed amongſt all his acquaintance, and in our own neighbourhood, for Lady ——. The gayeſt libertine of the age was generally thought to have become the ſincere penitent; and to me was given the honour of his converſion. I ſpent my

days

days in a perpetual round of pleaſure. I was the firſt ſeen at every new entertainment, or curioſity, the workmanſhip of the ingenious artiſt, or the invention of neceſſity. I was known at all the gardens and walks in and about the town.

The preſents he had made me to adorn my perſon attracted the attention of every ſpectator, and the envy of not a few of my own ſex. Could they have foreſeen the event of things, I ſhould have been the object of their pity. They would not have deſired my ſplendor and grandeur, at the reverſion of ſo much diſtreſs and miſery. We were in Hyde-park, or Kenſington-gardens, every morning for an airing; and in the evening at a rout, aſſembly, opera, or play. The laſt entertainment I was particularly fond of, being an agreeable and rational entertainment, ſerving to delight and improve the mind.

Interrupting,

Interrupting, *I replied*, there is no public entertainment more inſtructive and amuſing than plays. They improve our morals, correct our follies, inſpire us with a love of virtue, excite an emulation for noble actions, ſet forth the dark intrigues of vice, and expoſe the falſe pleaſures, which delude and captivate incautious and unexperienc'd youth. In exhibiting the deplorable ſcenes of wretchedneſs and miſery, in which the indulgence of the paſſions involve mankind, and diſplaying the content and ſatisfaction, which conſtantly attend the due regulation and right government of them, they contribute to render vice odious and infamous, and virtue lovely and amiable. If any character is introduced, or any expreſſion uttered on the ſtage, inconſiſtent with good manners, or offenſive to modeſty, it ſhould be corrected. The fault lies with the manager, if it is not. It is not leſs blame-

able in the audience to permit it, whoſe diſapprobation would prevent a repetition.

To be ſeen at theſe places of entertainment, *ſaid the female*, is thought by ſome grave divines and gloomy Chriſtians to be little ſhort of publicly renouncing Chriſtianity. In my humble opinion, *Reverend Sir*, there is no merit in declaiming againſt, nor any virtue in abſtaining from them, provided nothing is done, or exhibited, either hurtful to morality, or religion. All are not ſaints, who go to church; nor is every one to be reputed a ſinner, who is found in a playhouſe. The attentive hearer, who will make a ſuitable application of the matter to himſelf, can never depart from either place unimproved, or unedified. I was much diſpleaſed at the attempt of a prelate of your church, in conjunction with an eminent magiſtrate, to ſuppreſs the exhibition of a play, which had always been

been the favourite of the town from its firſt appearance on the ſtage to the preſent period. They abſurdly ſaid, it encouraged lewdneſs and diſhoneſty, and was the ſchool for training up youth to the bagnio, and the gallows. They ſucceeded in having the exhibition of it for a time ſuſpended, not greatly to the credit of the underſtanding and good ſenſe of the managers, in giving way to weakneſs and prejudice. The play, I allude to, is the Beggars Opera.

The Beggars Opera vindicated.

In my opinion, *ſaid the Parſon*, the accuſation is unjuſt. I will candidly allow the different cenſors to have read it; and at the ſame time ſhall be ſo free to ſay, that upon the judgment paſſed they do not underſtand it. The opera contains a fine ſatire upon former times, and is not leſs applicable [*there it offends, and hurts*] to the preſent. I do

not know, nor have I read, of a ſingle perſon brought to the gallows by ſeeing it; though I confeſs, and the public will give me credit, that many of its readers, of all ranks, orders, and profeſſions, have moſt richly deſerved it; if, by their wealth, power, or influence, they have fortunately for themſelves, not for their country, eſcaped it. Bad as this opera is proclaimed, the Chances, the Fair Quaker of Deal, and many others, are more miſchievous to the morals of youth. The ſuppreſſion of night-houſes, gaming-houſes, billiard-tables, and bawdy-houſes, where youth are firſt ſeduced and corrupted, and afterwards, to make good the loſſes and expences incurred, excited to depredations on the public, will really contribute to the cultivation and preſervation of honeſty and ſobriety amongſt the lower claſs of the people, not the ſuppreſſion of this opera, which many of them cannot read, few, if any, underſtand, and leſs go

go to ſee. But what would a Peachum ſay upon this ſuppreſſion? Trade will be at an end; there will be no market for Tyburn; the jails and priſons will be turned into workhouſes, and the ſword of juſtice ſheathed. I do not find upon conſulting the records of Newgate, that ever one of the multitude of culprits aſcribed his untimely fate to poor Gay, [whoſe honeſt memory, more precious than his bitter accuſers, is moſt groſly inſulted,] but to the very ſame cauſes, which many good and pious folk of exalted ſtations may aſcribe the want of character, of money, of credit; namely, to gaming, to drinking, to wenching. Theſe are the only perſons, who may be offended, or injured, by ſeeing the opera; becauſe to ſuch only, the ſatire contained in it, is peculiarly pertinent and ſtriking; and they feel, though they diſregard *it*. The highwayman and houſebreaker cannot be

affected, they will not leave their whores and the bowl to see the finest play, that hath been wrote. The pleasure of the pickpocket lies *without*, not within, *the house*; such entertainments are to him dull and stupid. If great men of every station and profession will set the good example to their servants and dependents, the immorality and profaneness of the vulgar, so much and so justly complained of, would cease. Gay's opera might then be exhibited every evening, without any fear or danger of adding *one* to the multitude of thieves and prostitutes.

We had frequent opportunities, *said the female*, of being in private, purposely given by my parents, and eagerly desired by lovers for a more free conversation. At these times he frequently discoursed on the pleasures of matrimony; and vehemently exclaimed against and condemned the licentiousness of the times. This increased my esteem

eſteem for the man, and made me leſs careful of the woman; thinking them to be the real ſentiments of his heart, not a cloak for his intended villainy.

After ſome months courtſhip, and no mention of the nuptial day, my father became uneaſy, fearing a diſappointment, or ſome new object, more equal to his rank and fortune, might have attracted his attention, and engaged his affection. He expreſſed his uneaſineſs and fear, which upon the next viſit I freely communicated to Mr. ———. He ſeemed to be much concerned, that a ſuſpicion ſhould be entertained of his integrity; and declared his readineſs to give my parents the ſatisfaction wanted, whenever they required it. I immediately made my father acquainted with the declaration, which did not afford the pleaſure I expected. He looked diſconſolate and dejected. I was troubled not leſs for

the ſuſpected ſincerity of my lover, than the concern of my parent.

He dined with the family on the following day. After dinner, taking my father aſide, he aſſured him of his honourable intentions; and, if agreeable to all parties, that day fortnight ſhould convince him beyond all doubt, that they were ſo. My father moſt affectionately embraced him, ſaying, I am perfectly ſatisfied; excuſe a fond parent's regard for a dutiful child. When he turned round, I obſerved a viſible change in his countenance; and he whiſpered in my ear, All is right, and well.

We ſpent the evening agreeably, and growing late, Mr. —— made the following requeſt to my father, that he would permit me to accompany him on the morrow to a maſquerade at the Pantheon with his brother and ſiſter. My father perceived by my looks, that I wiſhed for a favourable anſwer. Suſpecting no deceit, after the ſolemn declaration

claration made, in the height of good humour and pleaſantry, he readily and chearfully granted it: adding a wiſh, that the entertainment might anſwer my expectation.

To avoid the ſtare, and prevent the tattle of the neighbourhood, we went privately in a hackney-coach to Taviſtock-ſtreet; to which place his carriage came about eight with his brother and ſiſter; and after maſking conveyed us to the Pantheon. The novelty of the entertainment, and the variety of company, afforded me unuſual pleaſure. We ſtayed till two in the morning, when we retired to a tavern in the neighbourhood of St. James's, where an elegant ſupper was provided.

After ſupper the Squire's brother and wife uſed ſuch familiarities, which, at any other time, I ſhould have thought indecencies in the married ſtate, which will not admit of immodeſt actions even

in ſecret; but, being overpowered with claret and burgundy, I ſo little regarded them, that the Squire took the ſame freedom without permiſſion, and without oppoſition. The married pair ſuddenly ſtarted up, and withdrew to an adjoining room, apologiſing for their rudeneſs, in having interrupted thoſe pleaſures, which lovers uſually enjoy, when they are alone. Their abſence being highly agreeable to both parties, they retired without an intreaty to ſtay.

When the Squire had faſtened the door, and ſat down, Come, my dear girl, he ſaid, let us fill a bumper of ſucceſs to the approaching nuptial day. I drank it with real ſincerity, and warmth of affection. After a few minutes he began to be exceedingly amorous, and preſſed the favour, promiſing, and vowing, eternal fidelity. I had not the power of reſiſting. The curſed villain had mixed ſomething in the glaſs of wine, that rendered me incapable

capable of refuſing the vile requeſt, or oppoſing the wicked attempt; and had nearly occaſioned, what I have ſince wiſhed, my death.

No ſooner was the baſe paſſion gratified, but he was for haſtening home. His relations, whom I expected to accompany us, were gone. About five in the morning, the uſual time of the maſks breaking up, after having undreſſed at the warehouſe, he ſat me down at my father's, promiſing to dine and ſpend the enſuing evening at our houſe.

A flood of tears put a ſtop to the narration. The recollection of that fatal night overwhelmed her. O Sirs, ſaid ſhe, forgive a woman's frailty, and weakneſs. I have reaſon to lament the day, when my virtue and peace were raviſhed from me. From that fatal hour I have known, and felt, nought but trouble, vexation, and ſorrow; have been abandoned to all the

horrors of ſhame and guilt, and ſuffered inexpreſſible diſtreſs and misery. From all which your goodneſs and charity have happily extricated, and reſcued me. This ſerious reflection put an end to the tale. We were too much affected to permit her to proceed. The Parſon took his leave, telling her to remember to be thankful to God in her prayers, to whoſe goodneſs alone and kind providence ſhe owed her preſent preſervation.

On Maſquerades.

Theſe expenſive, ridiculous, and immoral entertainments, diſcountenanced and laid aſide in the preceding reign, are become the favourite diverſion of the preſent age. His Majeſty hath expreſſed his diſapprobation, and hath alſo ſhewn it by not having honoured them with the royal preſence. The plea for their continuance, *the promotion of trade*, may appear plauſible

in

in the opinion of the artizan and manufacturer. Evil however is not to be permitted for the little advantage and benefit, that will come out of it. Arts and manufactures, when made to ſerve the purpoſes of vice and folly, merit not encouragement. Can the acquiſition of a few hundreds by individuals be a recompence for the various miſchiefs, they are productive of to the public? What ſcenes of mad mirth, of lewdneſs, of intrigue, of drunkenneſs, are exhibited, and carried on! The chaſte and ſober viſitors at entrance will find their chaſtity and ſobriety the worſe, not the better, upon leaving the place, from the behaviour and converſation of the looſe and diſorderly multitude. He, that goes in the honeſt man, will come out the debauchee, and the virgin a rake in heart. It is poſſible to viſit an infected place, and eſcape without catching of the contagion. We may aſſociate and converſe with drunkards

drunkards and proſtitutes, and our morals receive no taint. Is it prudent to viſit the one? Is it diſcreet to be ſeen with the other? The immenſe profuſion and prodigious waſte of the gifts of nature are not to be permitted at any time, leſs when diſtreſs and want ſo much abound. The talk of a reformation is vain, and the attempt will be fruitleſs, without a ſuppreſſion of theſe entertainments, the mart for drunkenneſs and debauchery, of pride and prodigality. The venerable bench ſhould make one effort in the ſupport of the dying cauſe of religion and virtue to have them ſuppreſſed. Whoſe favours need they to court; whoſe frowns to fear? The reproaches of fools and the curſes of reprobates, the worthies, who will be offended and diſguſted, are harmleſs and inſignificant. It will be their glory to be the contempt and deriſion of thoſe, who are the contempt and deriſion of the ſenſible and virtuous

part

part of the nation. His majeſty will promote, not oppoſe, the laudable deſign. From the great dearth of wit and humour, the principal ſupport of theſe entertainments, and the perſonated characters, aſſumed by the great and wealthy, being realized by the preſence of the low and dirty originals, of taylors and mantua-makers, hair-dreſſers and milliners, there is a diſtant proſpect of their being laid aſide: ſuch mean and dull aſſociates not being ſuitable to the ſtation and dignity of peers, peereſſes, ſenators, &c. whoſe honour, for which they have a ſacred regard, if their manners are looſe, will be tarniſhed, if not loſt.

A Converſation.

The Squire with the Parſon called the next morning at the cottage, requeſting the favour of my company to the county town, where a meeting of the electors had been advertiſed upon

upon the death of a member. I got up, and walked with them. We mixed with a ſelect company at the principal inn. After dinner the diſcourſe turned upon the diſtreſſed ſituation of the national affairs, and the danger of loſing our liberties. I remember, *ſaid a grave gentleman*, to have read, that the pride, the haughtineſs, and the oppreſſion of the Cortes in Spain, and of the nobles in France, Denmark, and Sweden, made thoſe monarchies abſolute. Do our Lords and Commons ſeem diſpoſed to do any good for the people? May not the people, deſpairing of conſtitutional relief for public grievances, and irritated by diſtreſs and oppreſſion, having no eſteem and veneration for them, and inflamed with the ſpirit of revenge, follow the example of thoſe ſtates, annihilate the power of parliament, and deſtroy the tyranny of miniſters by a voluntary ſurrender of their freedom

and

and liberties to the crown? A miniſtry obſequious, a nobility proud, a clergy indolent, a parliament dependent, the gentry luxurious, tradeſmen and farmers avaricious, landlords oppreſſive, the poor diſtreſſed, a ſtanding army, a powerful navy, are circumſtances favourable for the eſtabliſhment of a deſpotic power.

Theſe are imaginary fears, *replied an elderly gentleman*; whilſt the law is made the ſtandard of the prerogative by the Sovereign, and the rule of obedience by the people. When this fence of their liberty is broken down, either by the uſurpation of the prince, or the faction of the people, then, not before, the fear for the conſtitution may be juſt. An Engliſh ſovereign, who hath a regard for his private peace and the intereſt of his poſterity, [and his preſent Majeſty hath a numerous iſſue] will never want to eſtabliſh deſpotiſm, whatever may be the dark deſigns of a miniſtry,

miniſtry, upon the ruin of a generous and loyal people. The King is a gentleman of more probity and wiſdom than to attempt, even to meditate, it.

I agree with you, *anſwered another*, that all our fears are imaginary; and, I am ſatisfied, that, if ever deſpotiſm ſhould be eſtabliſhed through the wickedneſs of miniſters and the weakneſs of the prince, inſenſible of, or deſpiſing, the happineſs of reigning over a free people, it will not be, from the nature of the climate and the temper of the people, of long duration. The ſucceſſors of theſe ſlaves will never reſt, till they ſhall have thrown off the yoke of their degenerate forefathers, and reſtored England to that liberty, which conſtitutes the happineſs of Engliſhmen, and makes their conſtitution the envy and admiration of Europe. Liberty is the natural plant of this iſland, its growth may be checked, but its root can never be extirpated.

Notwithſtanding

Notwithſtanding what you have advanced, *ſaid another*, there is danger from a dependent parliament. Whilſt the ſmall boroughs, whoſe electors are few, and have nothing to repreſent, and the re-election of placemen and penſioners continue, parliaments will be nothing more than meer form, and the people of England only nominally free. The proceedings in parliament ſhew, that the conſtitution is verging towards this inſignificancy; *number*, not reaſon, deciding *every queſtion*, and determining every legiſlative act. With ſuch a venal band, entirely at the devotion and diſpoſal of the court, the miniſter may do, what he will; he is ſecure from public inquiry. In the independency of parliament our liberties are ſafe; when that ſhall terminate, ſlavery will begin.

We have heard much talk, *replied an old Farmer*, of a venal and corrupt parliament. Who are to blame, if the parliament

liament ſhould be dependent upon the crown? Will not the fault be with the electors? Why do they not exert themſelves, when the opportunity offers, and exclude the rogues from repreſentation? A law is in being to preſerve the freedom and independency of parliament, in vacating the ſeats of placemen, who are ſuppoſed to be unfavourable to the cauſe of liberty. Do electors regard it? The ceremony of kiſſing hands is ſcarce finiſhed, before the conduct of the placeman is approved in being rechoſen by his conſtituents.

I know, *ſaid the Squire* that courtiers, placemen, and miniſters, are thought to favour deſpotiſm; and exclaim againſt the remonſtrances of the people, as ſubverſive of the conſtitution. Liberty and property, however, are in no danger, nor will anarchy and confuſion take place, whilſt the laws are preſerved pure, and juſtice is faithfully adminiſtered. There is alſo a ſufficient

ficient quantity of the ſpirit of republicaniſm in this kingdom, to prevent prerogative from overwhelming the liberty of the ſubject; and the crown, ſupported by the nobility, clergy, and gentry, is under no apprehenſion of having its prerogative undermined by liberty. The felicity of the moſt abſolute monarch in Europe falls exceeding ſhort in the compariſon with that of a King of England, who governs by the laws of the conſtitution, and poſſeſſes the affections of his people. His Majeſty, I apprehend, Gentlemen, is wiſe enough to know this, and neither wants, nor wiſhes, to be, becauſe he cannot be, greater, than he is.

It is not to be denied, *replied a Gentleman*, that there have been, and may now be found men, the friends of arbitrary power, who would deſtroy the rights of the people, and endeavour to make the Crown abſolute. The general

general diſpoſition of the nation however hath always inclined, and, we doubt not, ever will incline, to the other way. Attempts have been frequently made againſt the liberty of the ſubject, [hiſtory affords inſtances of the weakneſs of the Sovereign] but never made without a formidable oppoſition, which reſted not, till it had rendered the one abortive, and ſecured and confirmed the other, even procured freſh grants from the Crown in favour of the liberties of the ſubject.

A gentleman, *who came from London*, had heard with attention the converſation, and was offended at the ſuſpicion of a deſpotic intention, addreſſed himſelf to the company, ſaying, Gentlemen, though a ſtranger, hear me with candour and patience, *whilſt I offer a few words in defence of his Majeſty*, whoſe perſon, conduct, and underſtanding

ſtanding have been abuſed, condemned, and ridiculed. I cannot think any Gentleman ſerious in declaring, that the King, Miniſtry, and Parliament have an intention to inſlave the people: the uſual and alarming cry indeed of the diſappointed and neglected in every reign. We are in more danger from the degeneracy and corruption of our manners, than from the deſigns of courtiers, or the treachery of Parliament. The licentiouſneſs of the pen is a proof, that there is no want of liberty in writing; its deſtruction will not be under the preſent Sovereign, and, whenever attempted, there will be no want of public ſpirit to oppoſe the attempt, and prevent its ſucceſs. I would not be the laſt to draw the ſword, and ſhould rejoice to plunge it into the heart of that man, who could dare to proclaim the King a deſpotic prince.

The Character of the King vindicated.

Frequent and numerous have been the illiberal invectives againſt the Sovereign. The preſumption of writers, in deſcribing a character unknown to them, doth not aſtoniſh. They know, that few people have underſtanding, and of thoſe, who have, not many, through lazineſs and indolence, exert it. The credulity and ignorance of the multitude are known to a proverb. From theſe cauſes it is, that they venture to publiſh the moſt infamous falſhoods, and not without the deſired ſucceſs, for they are credited. Why? It is not a difficult matter to perſuade men to believe every thing, who either from indiſpoſition or incapacity will not, or cannot, make an inquiry into the truth of any thing. The conduct of favourites and miniſters may be a proper

proper ſubject for public diſquiſition and ſatire, but ſurely the perſon of the Sovereign ought to be held ſacred. So rude and coarſe however are our manners, that not content with treating the moſt exalted characters with abuſe and ſcurrility, we break out into the moſt indecent and licentious language againſt Majeſty itſelf. The inſolent treatment, which a private gentleman would reſent, and be commended for ſo doing, every blockhead, who can hold a pen in his hand, thinks, he hath a juſt right to offer to his Sovereign with impunity, and expects the Prince to do, *what he himſelf would not do*, that is, *patiently and quietly ſubmit to the inſult*. However pleaſing the language of a Junius, there is not, I am perſuaded, a man to be found in the whole kingdom, who hath a feeling for his own reputation, whom the virulence of the ſatire did not offend. His Majeſty is not, what ſome, who know him not, have

never converſed with, nor even ſeen him, have repreſented him to be. He is far from poſſeſſing ſuch weak abilities, and being ſo deficient in political knowledge, as have been inſinuated. It may not be amiſs to corroborate the aſſertions with facts. The letters, brought to the ſecretaries of ſtate from the ambaſſadors and conſuls abroad, he peruſes, and frequently writes his opinion of the contents on the margin. Whenever he condeſcends to do this, his remarks are allowed by very able judges to be clear, pertinent, and ſenſible. This is no compliment paid to royalty; it is juſtice due to the underſtanding of the man. Take another proof of his good ſenſe, if what hath been produced, is not ſufficiently convincing. Every one, who hath heard his Majeſty deliver his ſpeech in the Houſe of Peers, muſt confeſs, that he ſpeaks, like a ſcholar and a King, with grace, with elegance, with propriety, and with dignity. Few

of

of his ſubjects equal, none excel, him in this particular. Fools and dunces were never known to ſpeak thus; even perſons of diſtinguiſhed eminence for their learning have fallen greatly ſhort of this excellence. Againſt the private and domeſtic character of the Sovereign there lies no exception; malice and ill-nature have nothing to find fault with; it is amiable and lovely. How *a good man* can be *a bad prince*, or a man *of ſound ſenſe* make *a ſilly king*, more ſo *a tyrant*, for ſuch are moſt deſpotic princes, the curſe, the plague, the ſcourge of mankind, is, I own, beyond my underſtanding, even conception. I am pleaſed, Gentlemen to have my opinion corroborated by that able ſtateſman Lord Cheſterfield, who knew *men* and *courts*, and did not entertain the moſt favourable ſentiments of the character and underſtanding of princes in general. Writing to his ſon of the late King's illneſs, which occaſioned num-

berleſs fears and apprehenſions, on account of the minority of his ſucceſſor, he thus deſcribes the character of the Prince of Wales: "He is, ſeriouſly, "a moſt hopeful boy; gentle, and good-"natured, with good ſenſe." What a Cheſterfield wrote, may be credited without the imputation of weakneſs. The man, who was in high eſteem *for his wiſdom* with a Voltaire, *the moſt ſenſible writer*, and greatly reſpected *as a ſtateſman* by the King of Pruſſia, *the moſt conſummate politician of the age*, could not eaſily err in his judgment. I ſhall cloſe this vindication of the character of the King with a wiſh, that the ſubjects were as wiſe, chaſte, temperate, and merciful, as their Sovereign and his Conſort are. Public complaints would then ceaſe, and domeſtic happineſs be reſtored. This amiable pair ſhew to the court and the people, what the one ſex may be, and the other ought to be. If the example was imitated, modeſty would

would be again the ornament of the women, and integrity the characteriſtic of the men. I ſhall never think my liberty to be in danger from ſuch a prince. Had he been, like to a Charles, libidinous and neceſſitous, and educated in the principles of arbitrary power, which he wiſhed to have eſtabliſhed, notwithſtanding the melancholy fate of his predeceſſor, your fears of deſpotiſm would have been juſt.

My friend the Parſon roſe up, ſaying, Gentlemen, away with imaginary fears and dangers, the preſent alarming ſituation of public affairs, no matter from what cauſe, either the blunders of mi niſtry, or the malevolence of party calls upon all perſons of whatever de gree or quality, by the bonds of love of duty, of obedience, of perſonal in tereſt and ſelf-preſervation, firmly t unite for recovering the peace of thi kingdom, and ſettling the unhappy dif ferences with our American brethren

This remark and ſeaſonable advice of the Parſon put an end to the political diſpute, and reſtored the company to their former good humour. The evening was ſpent agreeably, and we parted in perfect friendſhip, all ſincerely wiſhing mutual confidence and harmony to ſubſiſt between the Sovereign and the people.

The next evening the Parſon came to the cottage, and the female proceeded in her ſtory. My body was ſo violently agitated, and my mind ſo much diſturbed with the ſad remembrance of what had paſſed, that I could take no reſt. I was at times frantic, which alarmed the family. The apothecary was ſent for: being abſent, a ſtranger was called in, who immediately perceived the malady, and knew the cauſe. Retiring into another room with my father, he aſked, With whom I had been in company; for I will be ſo honeſt and ingenuous to tell you, that your

your daughter, Sir, hath been ruined by an infamous ſcoundrel.

My father ſtood amazed and confounded, not knowing what reply to make, thinking the apothecary deceived him, and reſting aſſured of the honour and integrity of Mr. ——. After a little pauſe, he ſaid, O Sir, you are certainly miſtaken; her caſe is not, what you would inſinuate; it is impoſſible, it cannot be, for ſhe hath been with none other than the worthy and amiable Mr. ——, to whom ſhe will be married within a few days. He is too good a gentleman to have been guilty of any baſeneſs to my daughter; and, I am perſuaded, ſuch is his affection and love, that he would ſtab to the heart that man, who ſhould dare to attempt her virtue, or ſully her character. You are fortunate, that he is not preſent.

Sir, anſwered the apothecary, I may not deſerve your credit, being a ſtranger in your family, not to the character of

Mr. ——, who, inſtead of protecting your daughter's innocence, would glory in having accompliſhed her ruin. You may depend upon the truth of what I ſay; and for a proof, believe me, he will never more enter within theſe doors. He might have kept her for a miſtreſs, but never intended to make her his wife. He had ſcarce uttered theſe words, before the family apothecary came in, to whom he mentioned the ſuppoſed caſe, and, ſhaking his head at the ſad event, took his leave.

The next morning the female proceeded upon the Parſon's coming. Mr. T——, the family apothecary, on examining into the matter, confirmed the ſuſpicion; and Mr. ——, failing in the performance of his promiſe of ſpending the day, put it beyond a doubt. Words cannot expreſs the confuſion and diſtraction occaſioned in the family by this melancholy event. My father flew about the houſe like a madman, upbraiding

braiding me with tears of pity, and looks expreſſive of the moſt tender concern; vowing the moſt ſanguinary revenge on the perfidious Mr. ———; then threatening to diſpatch himſelf, that he might not ſurvive the infamy of his beloved daughter.

The next morning he went early to Mr. B——. He found him not, for he had gone off the night before in a poſt-chaiſe and four, leaving his brother and ſiſter behind him; who, upon inquiry, were a bully and his miſtreſs, whom he had hired for the more eaſy accompliſhment of his baſe deſign, that, ſeeing the liberties they took in the pretended matrimonial ſtate, he might be the leſs on the reſerve in his behaviour towards me.

Mr. B—— diſcontinuing his viſits, and neceſſity obliging me to retire into the country for the concealment of the approaching ſhame, gave riſe to diſtruſt and ſuſpicions in the neighbourhood,

not favourable to my credit and reputation. My mother, who moſt affectionately loved me, through grief for my misfortune, and vexation at the family diſappointment, in a few months [moſt unfortunately for her injured daughter] died. My father, unable to ſupport the loſs of ſuch an intimate friend and beloved wife, and to bear up againſt the ſcoffs and jeers of his neighbours, diſpoſed of all his effects, broke up houſe-keeping, placed his ſons and youngeſt daughter out to genteel trades, and retired to Wales. Whether living, or dead, I know not, nor how many, if any, remain of the family; having never heard from him, or them, ſince I left town.

The time drew near, when my ſhame could be no longer concealed. Fortunately I was delivered of a dead child, and very narrowly eſcaped the ſame fate. My joy however was of ſhort duration. Scarce had the feeble knees recovered

recovered ſtrength, when I was informed of my father's retreat by a letter from an unknown hand, acquainting me, that I muſt look for no more ſupport from him, and ſeek a maintenance from my own induſtry and labour. A moſt ſhocking and affecting incident, when my diſtreſſed ſituation, which required every human comfort, that could be adminiſtered, is conſidered. I had no time for deliberation. The people, with whom I lodged for privacy and concealment in my unhappy condition, grew uneaſy; they were afraid for their rent; and, as I had it not in my power to continue my preſents, they wiſhed me to be gone. Such is the caſe of the unfortunate female, that in her diſtreſs, inſtead of meeting with, what ſhe moſtly wants, pity and compaſſion, ſhe is ſure to be made the prey of every mercenary wretch.

My landlord was in too low circumſtances to recommend me, and the ap-

pearance I had made in life, and the education received, made me look above a mean employment. Having no friends in a ſtrange country place, I reſolved, though I could have ſupported myſelf with needle work, to go to town, and procure a ſervice in a reputable and genteel family. The bell ringing for prayers, the Parſon was obliged to withdraw, and I took a walk.

About four miles from the village, by the ſide of a park wall, I perceived at a diſtance a poſt-chaiſe with two ſaddle-horſes under the care of the driver. I was going to ſatisfy my curioſity concerning theſe viſitors to a place unfrequented and ſolitary, when I was alarmed by the diſcharge of a piſtol, immediately followed by a ſecond. I ſoon recovered from the ſurpriſe at the appearance of a wounded gentleman, who was ſupported to the chaiſe, and immediately carried off.

I learnt

I learnt upon inquiry, that it was a duel between two intimate friends, occaſioned by the one calling of the other fool in public company. Poor friendſhip indeed, that could not excuſe an indiſcreet word, when there was no injurious intention in the heart of the ſpeaker. Whatever the underſtanding of the gentleman might be, he did not ſhew it in his reſentment, nor was the other a whit behind him in his folly for accepting the challenge.

Upon my return to the cottage I mentioned the ſtrange adventure, that I had met with in my walk, and at the ſame time I gave a particular deſcription of the wounded gentleman. The female ſtarted up, and, ſpreading forth her hands towards heaven, ſaid, O God, I thank thee, for thou haſt heard my prayer. Wonderful art thou in thy doings, who hath avenged my wrongs on that perjured villain's head, Mr. ———. For, if your deſcription,

deſcription, Sir, is juſt, he was the wounded man. May this accident bring all his ſins and villainies freſh to his memory, diſpoſe him ſeriouſly to reform his abandoned life, and make reſtitution according to his power equal to the injuries, he hath done to our ſex. I am under no doubt of his being the aggreſſor, for he had always an high opinion of his good ſenſe, thinking it leſs reflection to be accounted a villain, than a fool. The caſe of all libertines, who judge the want of ſenſe to be more diſgraceful, than the want of religion.

On Duelling.

Premeditated murder is leſs excuſeable, than what proceeds from ſudden and violent paſſion. The imaginary notion of honour, which the military moſtly affect, cannot colour over the crime of duelling, nor ſhould it prevent the due puniſhment. The arms

of

of the military are given, and their honours conferred, for more noble purpoſes, the defending their country, and revenging its wrongs, not for the ſettling and determining private janglings and quarrels. Duelling is not to be reconciled with reaſon, nor juſtified by law, nor allowed by religion. Irreconcileable with reaſon, becauſe it is taking away a life, which no man can give; unjuſtifiable, becauſe it is depriving the community of a member, whoſe ſervices it hath a right to; not allowable by religion, becauſe God hath expreſly ſaid, Thou ſhalt not kill. Can an haſty word, which may admit of an excuſe, or an indiſcreet act, which may be retrieved, the principal cauſes of offence in the duelliſt, juſtify him in deſtroying his antagoniſt, before he hath lived out half his days, and ſending him to the awful tribunal of God with all his ſins unrepented of, and with the premeditated

tated deſign of committing another, the moſt heinous and unpardonable in the ſight of God and man, Murder. Suppoſe he ſhould fall, will the gratification of a revengeful ſpirit plead an excuſe for thus impiouſly ruſhing into the preſence of an offended and inſulted God? Every man is to wait his appointed time. He hath no right prodigally to throw away his own life, nor deſignedly to take away another's. For two men deliberately and premeditately to meet in cool blood to fight, when they are certain, that the conſequence may be death either to one, or both of the parties, which hath often happened, cannot be leſs than murder, nor ſhould the puniſhment be leſs than for that crime. If a man is inſulted in his perſon, or his reputation injured, the law is open, and will afford him the ſatisfaction wanted, either to protect the one, or vindicate the other. He is not to take the ſword of juſtice

out

out of the magiſtrate's hands, and become his own judge, and executioner, by revenging himſelf upon his ſuppoſed adverſary; whoſe injury or inſult [for it hath frequently ſo turned out] may have proceeded from the baſe inſinuations and malicious repreſentations of others. Let theſe men of ſpirit, who are ready upon every trifling occaſion to draw the ſword, diſplay it, where it is laudable and commendable, and yields true not falſe honour, in the ſervice of their country. Let them not beſmear their ſwords with the blood of their companions, even intimate friends, but with its profeſſed and declared enemies. If the folly, the wickedneſs, and the fatal conſequence of duelling cannot prevail with the gentleman to lay aſide this uncivilized and Gothic cuſtom, it is certainly a falſe delicacy, and unbecoming a man of honour, any longer to continue a practice, which every low and dirty mechanic, who

can

can borrow the barrel of a piſtol, or purchaſe a ruſty blade, hath now taken up. If the ſurviving duelliſt was to be hanged, and both bodies were to be drawn by horſes through the public ſtreets, and the giver of a challenge was to ride through the metropolis on an aſs, and ſent into perpetual baniſhment, an end would ſoon be put to this falſe honour.

A Converſation.

A clergyman, who was a relation to a pariſhioner, coming into the country, ſent a complimentary offer to the Parſon of his ſervice on Sunday. It was kindly accepted, though the ſervice did not give the ſatisfaction, he could have wiſhed. The Parſon miſtook his audience; they were ruſtics, not ſtudents in metaphyſics. The ſubject, being Trinity Sunday, was myſtery, and the ſermon throughout was a myſtery, conſiſting of unintelligible explanations

explanations, and incomprehenſible reaſonings. The Squire and the Curate called the next morning at the cottage, and we entered into a converſation on the ſermon.

The old man began, ſaying, Amongſt the multitude of odd expreſſions and a variety of hard words, [which wearied his attention and confuſed his underſtanding,] the following from a conſtant repetition ſtruck me, The triune crucified God. What can we ſimple folk, Sirs, who are no ſcholars, underſtand by this expreſſion?

Bleſs God, *ſaid I*, that ye are not ſcholars; for in this matter ye would have puzzled yourſelves like to the Parſon, and not ſatisfied others. There is no explaining things inexplicable. Doth it not, Rev. Sir, ſurpaſs your underſtanding to comprehend, and explain, this expreſſion? Not to mention the words coequality, coeſſentiality,

ality, conſubſtantiality, &c. frequently, introduced. I meet with no ſuch expreſſion, nor words, in the ſacred writings.

I was not alarmed, nor terrified, *replied the old man*, though ſome of our dames trembled, when the preacher enforced the neceſſity of believing his doctrine under the penalty of ſuffering the tremendous ſentence of eternal damnation, being perſuaded, that no man hath an authority to demand my aſſent to the truth, of what he himſelf underſtands not.

I anſwered, Had the belief of the myſteries of religion been neceſſary for everlaſting ſalvation, they would have been clear and plain, not left vague and indeterminate for the employment of the wit and ingenuity of the learned, not to the content and ſatisfaction of the ignorant and illiterate. Though in theſe matters the moſt profound ſcholar is not a whit more ſenſible, than the dulleſt

dulleſt clown. I fully aſſent to the truth and expediency of Chriſtianity, and believe the ſaving faith of a Chriſtian to be, That a perſon was appointed, named Jeſus, to be the author of redemption and ſalvation, through repentance, and amendment of life. This is a creed, neither above, nor contradictory to, reaſon; it is not liable to cavil and diſpute, being collected from the Scriptures. I cannot be more than ſaved. Whether or no I believe Jeſus to be the ſon of God in the higheſt ſenſe, let doctors or churches, who hold either opinion, anathematize and curſe, I ſhall conſider myſelf in a ſtate of grace, and have hope of everlaſting ſalvation. All the confuſion, diſtraction, and perſecution about our religion, from the death of the founder, have been occaſioned by arbitrary, conceited, dogmatical, and viſionary churchmen, who muſt be wiſer than what is written, and preſumed to publiſh, what their maſter in his diſ-

courſes

courſes authoriſed not, and had no foundation in Scripture. Chriſt did not leave his ſyſtem imperfect; to be mended even by an Apoſtle.

I do not exerciſe myſelf, *ſaid the old man*, in matters, which are too high for me. Thoſe, who have not my humility, are little better than madmen, and thoſe, who liſten to the unintelligible jargon [for ſuch it is, which attempts to explain things incomprehenſible,] ought not to be at large. As I told you before, Parſon, I will think and judge for myſelf. I know not any right your Church, the Kirk, the Meeting, *&c.* or any divine upon the face of the earth hath to determine, *what I ſhall believe* and *practiſe for my eternal ſalvation.* The Scripture is plain and eaſy to be underſtood by the meaneſt capacity in thoſe matters. *So ſay ye all*, and ye ſay the truth, *they are*, and *ought ſo to be.* If not, of what uſe to mankind? Though the literati think, they only

only poſſeſs the key of knowledge to interpret them. What then have I, or you, to do with myſteries, when I have that knowledge, which makes me wiſe to ſalvation? Theſe are ſubjects of meer ſpeculation, with which thoſe, who have leiſure, or will employ their time idly and unprofitably, may alarm and diſtract themſelves with the imaginary conſequence of poſſeſſing a pure and ſound faith. I am perfectly ſatisfied with the comfortable reflection of having a merciful God through the interpoſition of a gracious Mediator.

I wiſh, *ſaid the Squire*, that no ſermons were permitted to be preached on this ſubject, and that the paſſages, which are ſuppoſed to allude to this, or any other myſtery, were ſelected out, and appointed to be read on the feſtivals without a comment. The reaſoning concerning things above reaſon muſt end in confuſion. How three can be one and one three, is too deep for human

human inquiry, and what the understanding of man cannot comprehend. I could hardly forbear the ſmile, when the Parſon declared the myſteries of our religion to be incomprehenſible, and the next moment ſeriouſly requeſting the attention of the congregation to his explanation. The obſcurity, in which they are delivered, and the variety of opinions entertained, equally plauſible, equally uncertain, and contradictory, ſhew, that they do not belong to us. Why ſhould a man deſire me to reſign up my faith and reaſon to his judgment in matters, which, he himſelf confeſſes, he can have no more knowledge of than myſelf, and declares, that he underſtands not? *The triune crucified God!* Is not this abſolute nonſenſe? Ye have all heard of the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, of Jeſus Chriſt being ate in a wafer. Is that Popiſh doctrine a greater abſurdity? Let every man enjoy his private opinion, in matters not

plainly

plainly revealed. I know of no right, he hath, to obtrude it upon me as abſolutely deciſive in points, which have employed the pens of the moſt learned in all ages of the Church, without coming to any other determination, than what the civil power countenanced *by a national*, not an evangelical, *eſtabliſhment*.

You might have added, Sir, *I replied*, that the explanations given have not proved ſatisfactory; have occaſioned diſputes and controverſies without end; have produced the moſt cruel and bloody perſecutions on account of ignorance, not impiety; and have been of great diſſervice to the Chriſtian cauſe by the increaſe of Deiſm; whoſe advocates might be brought over, provided myſteries were left myſterious, and they were not called upon to ſubſcribe the more incomprehenſible language of their expoſitors.

Pray, *ſaid the Squire*, addreſſing the female, let us hear your opinion. You have given great attention to the converſation. *She replied*, It will not be expected, worthy Sir, that I ſhould preſume to give judgment in ſuch a weighty matter. What is ſo intricate and perplexing for the learned to unravel and unfold, muſt be beyond the capacity of female weakneſs to determine. Though I muſt confeſs, that, in what I have read or heard about myſtery, I am not inferior in wiſdom to the teacher, or writer, that is, I know nothing, I am yet to learn. It would require the aſſiſtance of a folio dictionary to underſtand the meaning of the multitude of unſcriptural words uſed in the explanation, more unintelligible than the doctrine intended to be elucidated. All this confuſion concerning myſtery, pardon the preſumption, Sirs, is owing to pride. You learned gentlemen do not chooſe to be upon a level with the reſt

of

of mankind. Scholars are fond of and delight in the marvelous, which ſurpriſes the vulgar, and raiſes an opinion of their abyſs of learning.

We need not, *ſaid the old man* interrupting, envy their ſuperiority, who not being content with the enjoyment of their ſenſes on earth, loſe them by making a journey to the clouds. What is left myſterious in the ſacred writings, nothing ſhort of inſpiration, which hath not pretended to it, can explain. The clergy of every denomination would employ their time to a better, becauſe to a more uſeful purpoſe, in endeavouring to reform the manners of the age. The preſent times require the utmoſt exertion of the clerical abilities, not more for the ſecurity of Proteſtantiſm, than the defence of Chriſtianity, and the ſupport of virtue, ſince *popery* is making large ſtrides *amongſt the lower*, *deiſm* is advancing *amongſt the higher*,

and *vice* hath infected *every claſs of the people.*

They muſt not expect me, *ſaid the female*, to be a believer of their tenets, which contain nonſenſe too ſublime for my weak underſtanding. If myſteries were confined to the Scriptures without an arbitrary expoſition, we ſhould be tired to find, what now at every turn of a walk we meet with, an infidel.

I have obſerved, *replied the Squire*, addreſſing himſelf to the Curate, that you have not favoured the company with your ſentiments, they ſhall finiſh the converſation, and be deciſive. I expect not, *anſwered the Parſon*, ſuch a compliment being paid to my underſtanding, that my opinion ſhall be deciſive, or that I know any thing more of this matter than yourſelves. What is above reaſon, and contrary to the ſenſes, is both inconceivable, and inexplicable. My poor wit ſhall not explore,

plore, what the Almighty hath not thought fit to reveal; nor ſhall I preſume to explain, what no one can conceive an idea of. In the Scriptures we read of three divine perſons conferring different benefits on mankind. Let us accept the benefits, and expreſs our gratitude by obſerving the laws delivered in the Goſpel, leaving the nature and the manner of their exiſtence, what it is, a ſecret, not to be comprehended *in this*, but to be diſcloſed *in another ſtate*. This ſaid, the Squire and Parſon roſe up, and departed to their reſpective homes.

In the evening the Parſon returned, and the female proceeded. Determined to go to ſervice, I ſet off in the ſtage for London. Within a few weeks I procured a recommendation by the help of a ſhilling to a place in the city at a wholeſale dealer's. By good nature and an affable diſpoſition, with a readineſs to turn my hand to any thing, and aſſiſt

my fellow-ſervants, I gained the eſteem of the whole family. Happineſs this, which made me forget the former miſfortunes. But, alas! it proved of no long continuance. My maſter at ſeveral times had miſſed money. At firſt he regarded it not; the ſum being trifling, he aſcribed the loſs to forgetfulneſs, or miſtake, in himſelf. The thief, finding himſelf undetected, grew bolder, and made free with a few pieces of gold. Mr. B. was greatly alarmed, yet he knew not whom to accuſe; the behaviour of every ſervant was decent and reſpectful, nothing gay, nor extravagant. He tried the uſual method of diſcovery by marks without ſucceſs.

Accidentally and unfortunately I left my pockets in my Miſtreſs's chamber one morning, being rung down in haſte, after I had been dreſſing her. My Maſter went up to ſee, if ſhe was ready to accompany him, and, obſerving the pockets, had the curioſity to examine

examine them, and on taking out a key he was aſtoniſhed, immediately went down to the counting-houſe, and, applying it to the ſcrutore, he opened it with eaſe. The thief was now diſcovered. The proof was too plain to be denied. The plea of innocence availed nothing. Though ſtrictly ſearched, neither money, nor valuables, were found. Mrs. B. interceded, thinking my tears to be unfeigned, and my ſolemn appeal to heaven ſincere. It produced not the deſired effect, the ſervants inſiſted upon my diſmiſſion, for they could not think of cohabiting with a thief. The good Mrs. B. notwithſtanding the ſtrong ſuſpicion and direct proof of my guilt, believed me to be honeſt, wiſhed me well, and ſlid two guineas into my hand.

This melancholy adventure brought on, through grief and vexation for the falſe accuſation, a ſevere illneſs. Without a character, innocently loſt, little

money, and no credit, think, Sirs, how uncomfortably, ſhall I ſay miſerably, I lived. I relied on that providence, which had hitherto ſupported me, for a vindication of my innocence in due time, and I was not diſappointed in the end. Being perfectly recovered, and the little ſavings near exhauſted in phyſic and nurſing, I began to turn my thoughts upon getting a place.

Walking out one morning for a little freſh air after my long confinement, I met a fellow-ſervant, who had lately left the ſervice. He rejoiced to ſee me, ſaying, that the real thief was diſcovered, and acquainted me with the ſtory Our maſter, ſaid he, ſome few weeks after you was gone, though the thief had been diſcharged, continued daily to loſe money. He began to doubt of your guilt, reproached himſelf for having been too haſty in believing, and feared, that he had done you wrong by an abrupt diſmiſſion from his ſervice. We were

were all in a general confuſion, each ſuſpecting the other for the thief, and all unanimouſly agreeing, that you had been moſt groſly injured. The apprentice appeared to dreſs ſprucely, and affected to be thought the gentleman. The emoluments of his place and the private gifts of friends could not ſupport the appearance and character. This created a ſuſpicion, ſuſpicion produced an inquiry, and inquiry led to a diſcovery. Juſt as the young gentleman was going out in a new ſuit to Vauxhall, not ſuſpecting our maſter to be within, John was ordered to ſtop him, and bring him into the dining-room immediately. He had not time to undreſs, and being unexpectedly and peremptorily challenged, he acknowledged the theft, and confeſſed it was done by the means of your key, which, after having tried all the keys in the houſe, he found exactly to fit the ſcrutore, from which he had

another key made by a neighbouring blackſmith; who, being ſent for, confirmed that part of the ſtory. The pleaſure I received from this account was inexpreſſible, not for the diſcovery of the young man's guilt, but the manifeſtation of my innocence. Being late the female ended.

A Reflection.

How cautious and deliberate ſhould we be in paſſing judgment, upon what we ſee, and hear, that we may not injure the innocent, nor aggravate the guilt even of the wicked, by falſe, ungenerous, or malicious accuſations. Can we be too tender, ſcrupulous, or doubtful, when either the fortune, the reputation, or the life of an individual is concerned? There may be an appearance of guilt, and circumſtances to prove it ſtrong, the caſe of this unfortunate young woman, yet upon a cloſe and accurate examination they may turn out, neither

juſt,

juſt, nor true. The ſenſes are often deceived, the underſtanding impoſed upon, and the judgment miſtaken. Reaſons, before unknown, or not attended to, frequently occur for altering, or changing, our ſentiments. In matters of conſequence to a man's perſonal intereſt and ſafety ſhould any thing leſs than clear, plain, ſimple, and undeniable facts be regarded? The higheſt degree of probability falls ſhort of certainty. That things may be ſo, or we believe them ſo to be, is not a convincing and infallible proof, that they are ſo, is of no weight to determine our judgment; and conſequently to affirm, that they are ſo, is weak and ſinful. We want not for inſtances of perſons falſely accuſed, of preſumption in evidence from the cleareſt circumſtances, and the moſt conſiſtent incidents. Coleman, I remember, innocently ſuffered for a rape, committed by the daring and hardened villain, who drove

him to the gallows, and ſtood under it during the execution. A youth was lately acquitted for a capital offence at the Old Bailey, upon the proof of an alibi and a good character, though the proſecutor was poſitive to his identity, and the conſtable, who took him, ſwore, that he had perſonally known him to have been a rogue for four years. The real thief upon his acquittal came down from the gallery, and confeſſed the fact; who was not eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the other in ſize, features, dreſs, and voice. This young woman alſo would in all probability have fallen an innocent victim to juſtice, had the maſter, inſtead of diſmiſſing, proſecuted her. We ſhould therefore be clear from every doubt, before we preſume to be poſitive. Damages incurred may be repaired, but wrongs done by a falſe accuſation ſeldom meet with a proper recompence; and, when life is concerned, no adequate ſatisfaction can be made.

Here

The next morning the unfortunate fair continued her ſtory ſaying, The diſtreſs I had ſuffered through ſickneſs, and the loſs of character from an unjuſt ſuſpicion, were amply recompenced by the kindneſs of my maſter, who made it a particular buſineſs to find me out. After having related to me the affair of the apprentice, and intreating my pardon for the injury done, he propoſed, either to replace, or recommend me, which I preferred, to a millener. He decently cloathed me, and gave me a few pounds for preſent uſe, adding, that I ſhould never want a friend, whilſt he lived. He ſoon after to my misfortune died.

I was ſituated near the Royal Exchange with an elderly lady of good reputation, whoſe ſhop was much frequented by city ſparks. The life of theſe giddy conceited creatures ſeemed to be wholly taken up in fauntering upon the walks, ſipping of coffee, eating puffs at

at Horton's, or chatting with milleners apprentices about the gaieties and diverſions of the town. Amongſt a multitude of theſe idle viſitors, a citizen of tolerable addreſs, who exceeded a courtier in tinſel, and looked upon his handſome perſon to be irreſiſtible, caſt his eyes upon me. He was a perfect maſter of intrigue, and knew all the pleaſing arts, which are too ſucceſsfully practiſed upon the innocent and unſuſpecting fair. He invited me to Horton's, to Vauxhall, to Ranelagh, to the Play, &c. I genteelly refuſed, knowing that the character of a young woman is not ſafe in company with ſtrangers. He preſented me with a variety of toys and trinkets, which I accepted with the reſolution of returning them upon the firſt diſcovery of his baſe intention. He did not keep me long in ſuſpenſe. A few looſe ſallies of wit betrayed the debauchee, who pretended to court me for a wife, when he deſigned to make

me

me his miſtreſs. His importunities being troubleſome, and finding none other way of getting rid of the baſe ſolicitation, I returned the preſents, left the old lady, and went to the ſame trade at the court end of the town. I ſoon found my ſituation not changed for the better; for the ſame temptation to diſhoneſty accompanied me. I had not been long in this place, before a ——— diſcovered, as he termed it, a new face. The procurers and procureſſes to his abandoned luſt were employed to bring me over. If they ſhould fail by money and perſuaſion, they were to decoy me to a nunnery, where, to the diſhonour and diſgrace of magiſtracy, are proſtitutes openly harboured, and a multitude of females continually debauched, even within the verge of the court. Being upon my guard from the late adventure, too recent in memory to be for-

gotten, all overtures proved fruitleſs.

One morning, when I was forming a reſolution of leaving the place, a lady elegantly dreſſed, whom I ſuppoſed from the carriage and livery ſervants to have been a perſon of quality, came to the ſhop, purchaſed a piece of muſlin, and ordered ſome patterns of Bruſſels lace to be ſent to the nunnery. A variety of patterns was immediately procured from the lace chambers, and I was ordered to dreſs, and wait upon this pretended lady of quality. I was ſoon ready, being highly pleaſed with the errand, thinking it might turn out to private advantage, by introducing me to the notice and favour of the lady.

When I got to the houſe, I was immediately ſhewn up to the dining-room, and deſired to wait, the lady being at preſent engaged. Looking round the room,

room, I obſerved a variety of pictures, calculated by the vile artiſt to excite looſe thoughts, and luſtful deſires. Caſting my eye upon the table, I ſaw a book, which I had the curioſity to take up, whoſe title was Memoirs of a Lady of Pleaſure. A moſt infamous book! Suſpicions immediately roſe, and I had reaſon to fear, that I had been betrayed. This cannot, I ſaid to myſelf, be a houſe of good repute, and ſobriety. Such pictures and books ſure cannot gain admiſſion into the manſions of perſons of diſtinction. Beſides the ſervant had, I recollected, a moſt ſtaring and impudent look, and her apparel rather ſhabby, and dirty.

I had hardly formed the reſolution of preſerving my reputation at the hazard of my life, before the door opened, and I was accoſted by this profligate ———. Have you brought the laces, Child? Walk into the next room, where my lady is, who is now diſen-

gaged

gaged from company. I dropped a curt'ſey, and begged to be excuſed ſtaying any longer, having orders to return immediately home, and leave them with her ladyſhip. Upon this the door opened, and not complying with his requeſt, he began to be rude, and attempted to force me. I thruſt him away with violence, ſaying, My ——, I am not for your baſe purpoſe. You have nothing to tempt me to be diſhoneſt. You ought to afford protection to innocence, and by your example condemn theſe lewd practices. That ſ—— is a falſe repreſentation of the honour of an abandoned ———. Is the attempt to corrupt and debauch a virtuous female becoming the eminence of your ſtation? Your greatneſs may ſecure you from the puniſhment, cannot excuſe the guilt of the ſin, nor will your wit defend, or juſtify, the commiſſion of it, at the hour of your death. The remonſtrance produced

no

no effect. He ſmiled, and, coming forward, ſeemed reſolved to gratify his luſt. I retired to a corner of the room, and taking out my ſciſſars, which I fortunately had in my pocket, I aſſured him in the moſt ſolemn manner, that, if he offered to approach me, or obſtructed my paſſage out of the houſe, I would ſtab him to the heart. The wildneſs of my looks and the vehemency of the expreſſion ſo terrified the debauched ——— [for villains, you know, Sirs, always turn out the arranteſt cowards, when reſolutely oppoſed,] that he permitted me to leave the room and houſe unmoleſted and undiſturbed.

When I got home, whom ſhould I obſerve in the parlour, in cloſe converſation with my miſtreſs, but the good lady of quality; who, on perceiving my quick return, ſuppoſed his lordſhip had failed in his deſign, and the curſed reward, which was to have

have been the price of my ſhame, was loſt. Thou monſter of iniquity, I ſaid, infamous wretch, thy perfidious ſcheme hath not ſucceeded. Well mayſt thou tremble, and turn pale, knowing that thou deſerveſt to feel the furious reſentment of an injured woman, whoſe ruin thou intendedſt to have accompliſhed. She got up haſtily, apprehending miſchief, and flew out of the ſhop, fear adding wings to the flight, which I accompanied from a ſudden guſt of paſſion with imprecations on her wicked head.

The female was interrupted by a meſſage from the Squire, requeſting our company to the county inn, where an elegant dinner was provided for the entertainment of the neighbouring gentry. We immediately roſe, and accompanied him. Dinner being over, politics as uſual was the ſubject of converſation, and, what might be expected, being the moſt intereſting to the

the nation, the American war. From a variety of confuſed and contradictory opinions I ſelected out, and wrote down, the moſt material.

The Americans, *ſaid a country gentleman*, might not have continued refractory, had lenient, not rigorous, meaſures been purſued. Dragooning affects the ſenſes, will not convince the underſtanding. I never knew an untoward child made the better for whipping. Intimidated it may indeed be, not reformed, by the puniſhment. When the fear is ſubſided, he generally returns to his former diſobedience.

The humouring a perverſe child, *replied a gentleman farmer*, encourages undutifulneſs, and renders him incorrigible. The miniſtry ſhould not court, but enforce obedience. Mild and gentle proceedings make it ſeem, that they fear them. They ſhould have gone on with rigour, till they had recovered

recovered their ſenſes. The mutability of miniſterial meaſures, one day hot and reſolute, the next wavering and timid, hath encouraged the Americans to continue the rebellious war with hopes of ſucceſs in the end.

A ſpeedy termination of the war with the coloniſts, *ſaid the Squire*, is wiſhed by every ſincere friend to the conſtitution of this country. Plans of reconciliation, the ſword being drawn, are nugatory. Diſtreſs alone muſt bring fools to their ſenſes; they are only to be made ſenſible of their miſconduct by feeling the bad effects of it. Soldiers ſent to America is murder. Frigates to deſtroy their trade would have produced the deſired event. Government cannot ſucceed by the military. Experience ſurely will convince the miniſtry of the grand miſtake.

The alarming conſequences of this American war I hope, *ſaid a London tradeſman*,

tradeſman, will bring on a coalition. Eſtates in houſes ſelling for nought; in land, high; money ſcarce; public credit low; no debts paying; no trade ſtirring; manufacturers ſtarving; poor's rates riſing, and thieves increaſing. I would gratify their wiſh, and let them be independent, that the craft and perfidy of France and Spain may be baffled and defeated, who rejoice at and promote the unhappy difference, and will not fail of making an advantage. Better to ſuffer the impoſition of a friend, than to ſubmit to the injuſtice of an enemy.

I am not, *anſwered a lawyer*, for giving up the dependency. Let the Americans have the power of taxing themſelves, and alſo of judging of the propriety and reaſonableneſs of the demand, and of their ability and ſufficency to comply with it. Had this power, reaſonable and equitable, which we enjoy by our repreſentatives, been

been allowed, this unnatural war would not have exiſted. Is there a King upon the face of the earth, who hath power to raiſe a ſingle ſhilling without the conſent of the poor ſubject, who is to pay it, without tyrannic violence? Why ſhould the American be taxed without his conſent, and contrary to his charters? I leave it to you, Gentlemen, to give the epithet to ſuch taxation, and to determine, how far reſiſtance is lawful.

I differ with you, *replied an old gentleman.* The King hath a right to the government of the colonies by charter, and to demand a ſupply of money, when the exigencies of the ſtate ſhall require it. The King, by leaving it to Parliament, hath only empowered Parliament to do, what he had a right to do.

Charters, *ſaid the lawyer*, are the prerogative of the Crown. Parliament hath nothing to do with them. If they are abuſed,

abuſed, or the limits of the grant are exceeded, the Crown is juſtified in altering, or recalling them. The King ſhould not have permitted the interference of Parliament. He was in America, what he was in Scotland before the union, not abſolute, but conditional according to the chartered grants. Both royalties had modes of government peculiar to themſelves. The legiſlature at that time had no power or right of taxing either. Alterations in old eſtabliſhed modes of government are hazardous, and generally productive of much evil. It would have afforded no little ſatisfaction to the friends of both parties, had the judges been called upon to give their opinion upon the offenſive acts paſſed, and the conſequent proceedings of adminiſtration, whether they were ſtrictly legal, and conſtitutional.

The Reverend bench, *added the Parſon*, would have acted in character,

and had the thanks of every good man, if the benevolent intention to prevent the effuſion of blood had been fruſtrated, to have endeavoured to prevent it.

A merchant cloſed the converſation, ſaying, That the Americans cannot do without the manufactures of this country, nor hath England a more profitable mart for vending them. It is therefore for their mutual intereſt to be at friendſhip, not enmity, with one another. If reſolved to be obſtinate, the ſpeedieſt and cheapeſt way to be rid of this expenſive and ruinous war is to give them up, like reprobates, to themſelves, and to withdraw our forces; to import the produce of the colonies in oppoſition with an additional duty, and to prohibit foreign exportation; and, for the encouragement of the ſame produce in other colonies, who chooſe to continue in friendſhip with the mother country, to

to give a bounty, and exportation for a certain term of years free. The alliance of France and Spain is only formidable through the want of that, which hath been ever fatal to the national peace and happineſs, and of advantage to foreign enemies, the want of union. It is time to have done with domeſtic diſſenſions, and to labour for the ſafety and ſecurity of the kingdom in defeating the malicious deſigns of its adverſaries,

The female the next morning proceeded. My miſtreſs, whom before I ſuſpected not, proved to be no better than the lady of quality; ſhe had been in keeping, ſaved a trifle, and for the convenience of aſſiſting procurers took the ſhop. I continued no longer than neceſſary to get a decent lodging. I now determined to leave town, and ſettle in the country. Having a perfect knowledge of the millenery

buſineſs, I reſolved to commence miſtreſs.

In a few weeks I heard of a little habitation at a market town, where was a want of our profeſſion, and coming from London I knew would be a recommendation in my favour. I ſoon got buſineſs, lived in credit and repute, and, through an aſſiduity and ſtudy to pleaſe trifling cuſtomers, I was eſteemed and beloved by the neighbours. I enjoyed the pleaſures of rural retirement for ſixteen months. The agreeableneſs of my perſon, a flouriſhing and increaſing trade, and a report of my worth occaſioned matrimonial viſitors, which I did not countenance, nor encourage, not intending to alter my condition, being ſufficiently happy and content in the ſingle ſtate. My reſolution however failed, and I was prevailed to give my company to a wealthy young farmer, thinking by this

this means I ſhould be releaſed from the cares and fatigue of buſineſs. My neighbours adviſed me not to loſe the golden opportunity, the man having a good paternal inheritance, which he had increaſed by induſtry and labour. I was perſuaded, gave him my hand, and in a few weeks found myſelf deceived. He had ſpent his fortune, mortgaged the family eſtate, got deeply into debt, and thought to reimburſe himſelf through the poſſeſſion of my effects, which he had conceited to be conſiderable from the decent appearance I made, and the paying ready money for every thing, I purchaſed.

Creditors demands upon the marriage became urgent, and receiving only kind and civil promiſes, the uſual mode of paying debts by ſpendthrifts, they took out a ſtatute, and ſeized upon all. He abſconded, and I was left deſtitute. Cenſorious and

ill natured reflections generally attend upon the unfortunate. Misfortunes, by that curſed ſpirit of talkativeneſs [called neighbourly chit-chat] in the time of diſtreſs, are ſure to be worked up into crimes. It was not enough to ſuffer affliction in the loſs of a decent ſupport in buſineſs, and the money acquired by it, but it muſt be heightened and aggravated by ſaying, that I had deceived the man, in paſſing for a perſon of property, when I was a beggar, and my extravagant pride had quickly exhauſted the little, he had left. I was a ſtranger ſettled, he born, in the town; it was in vain therefore to urge any thing in juſtification of my conduct, or to attempt a contradiction of the ungenerous reports. Thoſe, who before the melancholy event were delighted with, now ſhunned my company, and not a friend had I to aſſiſt and comfort me in my trouble. He, who was the villain, was accounted the innocent

innocent unfortunate, whilſt I, who had done no wrong, and was the real ſufferer, was called the cruel wretch.

There was no living long in this place, where I had neither neighbour, nor friend. Deſtitute of cloaths, proviſion, and money, having nothing more than what was upon my back, a little parcel of linen, and a few ſhillings, I left the deteſted town. A good conſcience however ſupported me in the midſt of theſe heavy afflictions. I knew, that I had not deſerved ill at their hands. I had confidence in God of ſome favourable incident; whoſe aſſiſtance I implored in ſilent prayer; being reſolved, whatever were my ſufferings and neceſſities, not to do any thing to remove the one, or ſoften the other, which ſhould add guilt to diſtreſs.

A Reflection.

You was right, *ſaid the Parſon*, in relying upon the providence of God, and commending yourſelf by ſecret prayer to his protection. Prayer affords eaſe to the afflicted mind. To which every perſon at ſome period of his life hath recourſe; for comfort, when he is in ſorrow; for relief, in neceſſity; for ſupport, in trouble; for protection, in diſtreſs; for eaſe, in pain; for conſolation, when he is dying. When ſorrow hath taken hold on us, and misfortunes have befallen us; when in this our anxiety and diſtreſs friends ſlight and deſert, or are unable and unwilling to aſſiſt us; when no hand offers to relieve, nor any one regards us, is it not inexpreſſible comfort to know, [and did you not, *ſaid he to the female*, experience that comfort?] that there is a God, to whom we may freely pour out our complaints, and from whom we

we may in due time aſſuredly expect relief? Is it not a pleaſure to reflect, that there is a being, who can defeat and fruſtrate the malice of wicked men, and in an inſtant deprive them of the power of doing miſchief? If you are convinced of the providence of God, you will never be uneaſy, whatever your misfortunes, ſufferings, or injuries are. The God, whom you ſerve, is able to ſuccour, to relieve, to avenge you. Whatever may be your future condition in life be contented and reſigned, and you need not doubt of the divine aid in the greateſt diſtreſs. The female interrupted, ſaying, I thank you, Reverend Sir, for this conſolation, and wholeſome advice. I am convinced of the good providence of God to an unworthy creature, in the relief you afforded, when I was almoſt driven to deſpair of human comfort. The Parſon took his leave.

The next morning the Parſon came early, being impatient to hear the continuation of the ſtory. The female proceeded. Having travelled a few miles, and finding myſelf faint through the exceſſive heat of the day, and extremely low from reflections on the paſt misfortunes, I went into a public houſe, nigh to the road, for reſt, and refreſhment. I fell aſleep. In a little time I awaked, and, miſſing the parcel, aſked the landlord for it, who anſwered ſurlily, I know nothing of it, neither am I anſwerable for it, not having it in keeping. To inſiſt on a reparation or reſtitution would have been productive of foul language and ill treatment. I paid the reckoning, and went away with a ſorrowful heart, having loſt all the little apparel, which I had ſaved from the rapacious hands of the mercileſs creditors.

Night coming on, I ſtopped at a thatched cot, ſeeing a bill for lodgers nailed

nailed againſt a tree. I aſked, if they could accommodate me for a few days. I was readily admitted, all being welcome gueſts to ſuch poor creatures, who may gain, but cannot loſe, from entertaining ſtrangers. I went immediately to reſt, being overpowered with fatigue, and ſlept, though hard the bed, comfortably.

I roſe early. Whilſt we were at at breakfaſt, a higler came for the poultry. Fixing his eyes upon me, he ſaid, Thou d—— b——, art thou here? Then turning to the cottagers, poor Will Sommers, whom ye knew, whoſe ruin was occaſioned by marrying this c—— toad, was found ſuffocated yeſterday in a ditch about twenty miles off. He accompanied the ſpeech with the moſt horrid imprecations, that he would never have any more dealings with the old people, nor ſhould any other, if they ſuffered me ſtay one night more in the houſe. This you may

think, Sirs, to have been an additional diſtreſs to an unfortunate wretch, but it afforded comfort upon reflection; for I ſhould have been diſpoſed without the threat to have left a place, where I could not have failed of diſagreeable viſitors from the neighbouring villages, when the melancholy tale ſhould be publicly known. I bid the old people farewel, and haſtened with ſpeed from the village, taking the moſt unfrequented paths to avoid the friends and acquaintance of the deceaſed.

After wandering up and down for ſome hours, in croſſing a large common field I was overtaken by a young gentleman, the hopeful heir of a worthy family, of whom I inquired the neareſt direction to the high road. He anſwered with rudeneſs, and, alighting, he uſed ſuch freedoms with his tongue, that I was ſatisfied of a baſe intention. Upon offering reſiſtance, and oppoſing his lewd embraces, he d—— me for a dirty

dirty b——, got upon his horſe, and rode off, vowing revenge. What a young villain, thought I, and a gentleman! Modeſty indeed in his countenance, but luſt raging in his heart. I condemned him, not leſs for his indiſcretion, than in the intended ſin; becauſe the gratification of the brutal paſſion with a ſtranger, might have been attended with the loſs of reputation, and the ruin of his conſtitution.

In leſs than half an hour two ſervants in livery riding hard came up, and ſeized me, ſaying, I had robbed their young maſter of ſundry bank notes. I pleaded my innocence, and ignorance of the affair. They ſearched my pockets, looked about the field, carried me to the ſpot, and found nothing. I was however hurried away before a magiſtrate, the young ſquire appeared, declared his loſs, and that he was laſt in my company. I expreſſed my reſentment at the villain's charge in a lan-

guage,

guage, becoming an injured perſon, perhaps not the moſt reſpectful before his worſhip, and laid open the whole affair in plain terms. It gained not the leaſt credit. He was a gentleman of a reſpectable family, conſequently could not have been guilty of the meanneſs and baſeneſs alledged, againſt him. The juſtice, not being able to commit me for a thief, ſent me for a month to the houſe of correction for a vagabond, and ſtrumpet.

It was in vain to remonſtrate againſt ſuch a judge, and ſo powerful an adverſary. The pleadings of poverty and rags were of no avail. Country juſtices frequently acquit, or condemn, as if they felt the cauſe, not heard it. Vindication is deemed inſolence. A juſtification of innocence is accounted impudence. An acknowledgment of the charge, and aſking pardon for an offence, *never committed*, will make the puniſhment the lighter. The ſquire,

the

the wealthy farmer, and the opulent ſhopkeeper, are heard with attention. The complaints of the poor are generally redreſſed with a ſevere reprimand, or a commitment to Bridewell on the next application.

I ſuffered the impriſonment with patience and reſignation. Before the expiration of the time my money was gone, and my clothes exchanged for filthy rags. Though driven to the laſt extremity, without a friend, without money, in a ſtrange place, ſurrounded with enemies, oppreſſed with hunger, cold, and nakedneſs, I did not deſpair of ſuccour, firmly reſolving rather to live miſerably, than to die ignominiouſly. Though had I been guilty of diſhoneſty, God, I am perſuaded, would have forgiven, what the law is obliged to puniſh, an act of abſolute neceſſity.

I will not mention the various afflictions and diſtreſſes, I felt and ſuffered from the inclemency of weather, the

cruelty

cruelty of villagers, and the uncharitableneſs of the gentry. I went from village to village, from houſe to houſe, ſeeking relief and reſt, and finding none. My appearance was ſo contemptible and deplorable, that I ſcarce merited the notice of the paſſenger; though I now and then ſmarted from the whip of a carter, and waggoner. I was hungry, and no one gave me to eat; thirſty, and no one offered me drink; naked, and no one cloathed me. Steal I would not, work I could not, even beg I dared not, for I was the ſcorn and deriſion of every one. D—d by one, b——d by another, pelted by children, worried by dogs, hooted at by the rabble, deſpiſed and loathed by beggars, my fellows in miſery, how inſupportable to human nature was ſuch a condition!

I could not forbear exclaiming, O God, what happineſs to live amongſt a civilized people, and to be born in a Chriſtian

Chriſtian country! When, unhappy wretch, will thy miſeries have an end! The ſons of rapine and violence in a priſon, however undeſerving their crimes and offences have rendered them of the friendly hand of charity, have the bare neceſſaries of life. What have I done to man, O heaven, to ſuffer in this manner? Am I worſe than the thief, and the murderer? Muſt I be wicked, becauſe I am poor; the ſtrumpet, becauſe in rags? Is my forehead branded with infamy? Doth my look make it ſinful to relieve me? O God, hear my prayer, and direct by thy over-ruling power the conſequence of deſpair!

I ſhall trouble you no more with the diſmal ſtory. Going from place to place for ſeveral months, lying in hedges on nights, and feeding on the refuſe of dogs in the day, I came to this fortunate ſpot, where I determined to end the miſerable life, not having ſtrength to proceed forward, and without any

ſubſiſtence

ſubſiſtence for two days. I wrapt up myſelf in my rags, commended myſelf to the mercy of God, and, perfectly reſigned, expected my diſſolution. You know the reſt, Reverend Sir. Words are wanting to expreſs my gratitude for your goodneſs, and the care taken by the old pair at your recommendation and expence. My prayers to heaven ſhall be continually offered up for your preſervation, and never ſhall I forget the hands, which have fed, and cloathed me.

Mention not, ſaid the Parſon, the little good my friend and I have done. We want no thanks; we are ſufficiently repaid in the reflection of having reſcued a worthy woman from wretchedneſs and miſery, and ſaving, we hope, an uſeful member to ſociety from deſtruction, and death. Give to God the glory of your preſervation; we were only inſtruments in his hands. If ever providence ſhall place you in a better

ſtation,

ſtation, remember your former diſtreſs, and never turn your face from a poor man, whoſe poverty, like to yours, may have been his misfortune, not his fault; if the former, he demands relief; if the latter, he will claim your pity. Suffer not ill thoughts to ariſe, nor entertain ſuſpicions, upon the ſight of diſtreſſed objects. You know not, who, nor what, they are, nor from what cauſe their wretchedneſs proceeds. Your diſtreſſed appearance made you to be ſuſpected, and ſuffer, for a ſtrumpet and a thief, when you was conſcious of your honeſty and innocence.

Alas! good Sir, replied the female, you need not to talk of a ſtation, which I ſhall never arrive at, and of wealth, which I ſhall never poſſeſs. May I never obtain the one, or acquire the other, ſhould I ſo far forget myſelf not to remember, what I once was, or to withhold charity from any poor perſon, who ſolicits it from my hand. I am

content

content to dwell in this humble cottage, and to be a comfort, and, as far as I am capable, to afford ſubſiſtence, to this elderly couple; to whoſe tenderneſs and care I owe, under God and your goodneſs, the preſervation of my life.

The Curate recollecting, that we had an engagement with the neighbouring Squire, [whoſe ſons he had under private tuition] took his leave, being highly pleaſed with the ſucceſs of this adventure; adding with a ſmile, that had he been ſomewhat younger, and his circumſtances better, he might have ventured to alter his condition. The adventure afforded me equal pleaſure, and I wiſhed every one to follow the laudable example of my Reverend friend, if they had the means, when ſuch diſtreſſed objects preſented themſelves. How many would have been preſerved from immature death, and lived ornaments to ſociety! Unfortunately

tunately *for the innocently wretched*, thieves and proſtitutes ſo much abound, that *they are alike ſuſpected*, and *equally ſuffer*, with the guilty.

The Squire was impatiently expecting us, being fearful, by ſtaying beyond the time, that ſome accident had fallen out in the way. The ſight of us removed the fear, and we were as uſual agreeably entertained. After dinner the Parſon aſſigned the reaſon for our ſtay, and related the whole of the adventure to the advantage and emolument of the unfortunate fair. The Squire and his Lady were ſenſibly affected with the narrative, which drew tears of compaſſion from their eyes, accompanied with a purſe of ten guineas for a ſupply of her preſent wants.

The Parſon, who had watched for a favourable opportunity, *ſaid*, Sir, you may remember, when I took your ſons under private tuition, it was upon the conditional promiſe of granting any future

future requeſt, when occaſion offered, and you could without any inconvenience grant it. I remember the promiſe, *replied the Squire*; pray make it, and, if in my power, be aſſured, that I ſhall be heartily diſpoſed to fulfil it. Upon this generous reply the Parſon took courage, *ſaying*, From your family connexions and genteel acquaintance, I am perſuaded you can be of ſervice to our unfortunate female. Let not her worth be loſt in a cottage. Your recommendation will reſcue her from living and dying in obſcurity. Say no more, *anſwered the Squire*, your requeſt ſhall be granted. I would ſee her, *ſaid his Lady*, that I may learn her qualifications, and provide her with ſuch neceſſaries, which ſhe muſt want to be introduced to the place, which you ſeem to think, ſhe is capable of undertaking. Would your Ladyſhip, *I replied*, take her under your roof for a few months, if not too great a favour,

you

you would ſatisfy yourſelf in particulars, and could recommend her from perſonal knowledge of her abilities. All condeſcenſion and goodneſs! Send her immediately, *ſaid the lady.* I obeyed, left the room, and went to the cottage with the joyful news, leaving the Parſon behind, who improved the interval of abſence to the benefit of the female, by ſpeaking in praiſe of her ſenſe, affability, and modeſty.

No ſooner had I arrived at the cottage, and mentioned the generous offer, but with tears of unfeigned joy ſhe expreſſed her gratitude, and turning round to the old pair ſaid, O my beloved parents, for ſuch I muſt call you, and ſuch you have proved, the ſorrow, which now afflicts me, is, that I muſt leave you, when you ſeem to want my aſſiſtance. Go child, *replied the old woman,* moſt tenderly embracing her, accompanied with a flood

of

of tears, go, thou muſt live, when we are no more. You have a worthy family for your friend, with whom your virtue will be in no danger. You ſhall have our prayers for your welfare, and we deſire to live no longer than to hear, that you are happy. Farewel.

Having dreſſed herſelf with a neatneſs ſuitable to the homely apparel, we went to the Squire's. His lady was waiting for her. She received her in a friendly manner, and after an hour's converſation returned to the parlour, ſaying, All, that hath been ſaid in commendation of this unfortunate female, is in ſtrict juſtice her due; ſhe is, Parſon, what you have repreſented, and, I am of opinion, will approve herſelf by her conduct deſerving of our beſt ſervices. We ſpent the evening chearfully, and went to our reſpective homes with the higheſt ſatisfaction from the reflection on the good deed

deed done. When I got to the cottage, I found Darby and Joan in tears for the loſs of their favourite child, whom they ſhould never ſee more. They were inconſolable. I wiſhed them good night, and left that to time and abſence, which reaſon and perſuaſion could not rectify.

After a few days, in which the converſation, the dreſs, and the company had made an amazing alteration in the unfortunate female, ſhe came to the cottage, and took a final leave of her good parents, [a moſt affecting ſcene of mutual diſtreſs] being recommended to the family of a perſon of a large fortune for a companion to the young ladies. With this family we leave her for the preſent, only remarking, that by report ſhe acquitted herſelf of the truſt with honour to herſelf, andſatis faction to her employers.

The Squire and his Lady, the patron and patroneſs of the now fortunate

female, were an amiable couple. Their domeſtic happineſs was never interrupted by feuds and quarrels, nor the company of each other neglected, or deſerted, for hounds or cards. Abſence, when buſineſs required, was the greateſt misfortune, they felt; they were never eaſy aſunder, and the right management of the family was the principal concern. Their behaviour was affable and courteous to all; to their ſuperiors they ever ſhewed the proper deference, and their inferiors never complained of the want of condeſcenſion. They not only knew, but practiſed, good manners. When they could not entertain, they carefullly avoided ſaying, or doing, any thing diſguſting, or offenſive, to the company. I never heard of the man, who was ever diſpleaſed, either with their converſation, or entertainment; the latter elegant and liberal, the former facetious and ſenſible. What I had obſerved

obſerved in this family, gave riſe to the following thoughts on the advantage of a polite and agreeable behaviour, and the mode of acquiring it. If the reader ſhall be pleaſed with the peruſal, the writer's end will be anſwered. The trifling digreſſion alſo may ſerve to fill up the vacant ſpace of time, till Fanny the chamber-maid ſhall become the Lady of the Manor.

Thoughts on the Advantage of a polite and agreeable Behaviour, with the Mode of acquiring it.

The politeneſs of the preſent age is much extolled and admired, yet many inelegancies appear in their words, and actions. Though it may be difficult to correct bad habits, to which faſhion hath given the ſanction, it may not be unacceptable to the genteel and polite to ſhew, what things are pleaſing to mankind, and what they abhor; that, by knowing what is fit to be done, and

what is neceſſary to be avoided, they may become the amiable and agreeable perſon. It muſt be acknowledged, that nothing ſo much diſpleaſes as a rude, arrogant, and unmannerly fellow; on the contrary, nothing ſets off to ſo great advantage, and ſo eaſily ſteals upon the affections of men, as a courteous, comely, and modeſt behaviour. It is reported of William of Naſſau, that his carriage was ſo graceful and pleaſing, that he never pulled off his hat, but he won a ſubject from the King of Spain.

An handſome mien, a ſprightly converſation, and good manners are accompliſhments, if not neceſſary, exceedingly uſeful for every one, who prefers public and ſocial life to ſolitude and retirement. Many perſons have ingratiated themſelves into the favour and friendſhip of thoſe, with whom they converſed, and procured for themſelves riches and honour, without any other merit

merit than that of being the well behaved man; whilſt others of diſtinguiſhed merit and acknowledged abilities have for their ſullen gravity, or the clowniſhneſs of their manners, been doomed to indigence, and obſcurity. Why are courtiers the moſt ſucceſsful managers for their own intereſt? Is it from a ſuperiority of underſtanding? No. They ſtudy the paſſions, what will pleaſe the eye, and flatter the heart; and render themſelves agreeable by an eaſy addreſs, polite wit, and condeſcending behaviour. Theſe recommendations cannot fail of ſucceſs, they are irreſiſtible, and they form the character of the accompliſhed gentleman. The art of pleaſing is the art of thriving. A fortune may be acquired *with it*, and never to be enjoyed *without it*. Every thing may be executed to advantage, which is accompanied with a graceful addreſs, and engaging manners.

Without a lively converſation and decent carriage our company is neither agreeable, nor entertaining. We even prefer the gay libertine to the virtuous and dull clown; the ſlovenly and rough behaviour of the one provokes our hatred and contempt, whilſt the ſprightly converſation and affable deportment of the other attract the attention, and gain our eſteem. Whoever ſtudies to make himſelf pleaſing to others, ſhould carefully obſerve, that whatever is offenſive to the ſenſes, either in words or actions, or conveys a looſe and filthy idea to the mind, or contradicts truth and received opinions, unleſs upon good grounds, ought not to be practiſed, not even mentioned.

Every man, whatever his ſtation of life is, hath a right, as a reaſonable being, to be treated with civility, and good manners. Be the man weak, or wicked, as he ſtands in the ſame claſs of beings with ourſelves, reſpect is due

to

to him. Mental and bodily defects, the work of nature, or the conſequence of a neglected education, are not fit ſubjects of ſcorn and deriſion. We ſhould diſdain to laugh and inſult the fool and ideot, becauſe they wear the image of their Maker, and are endowed with the ſame faculties, though from ſome defects in their bodily organs they cannot exert, nor exerciſe, them. Rudeneſs and inſolence to any man will admit of no palliation, nor excuſe.

As clowniſhneſs of manners renders our perſon diſagreeable, ſo a ruggedneſs of temper makes our company troubleſome, and perverts the principal end of converſation, the improvement of the mind. We ſhould always endeavour to accommodate ourſelves to the temper and diſpoſition of thoſe, with whom we aſſociate and converſe, not framing our behaviour according to our own particular will and fancy, provided no offence is offered to decency, good ſenſe,

or religion. We do not mean, that a perſon ſhould ſacrifice his underſtanding and judgment to the arbitrary dictates of others, but adviſe a ready compliance and chearful acquieſcence in matters confeſſedly indifferent. For as a tame ſubmiſſion to the impoſition of others, and a ſtudious gratification of their humours, diſplay more of the paraſite than the courteous and obliging perſon, ſo on the contrary, the man, who regards not, whether he pleaſes or not, and is tenacious of his own opinions in direct oppoſition to the judgment of others, that man deſerves the appellation of a rude and inſolent fellow.

To get rid therefore of a perverſe and ſupercilious behaviour, and to acquire a reſpectful and obliging deportment, we ſhould give ſome attention to find, what thoſe things are, which the greateſt part of mankind are pleaſed and delighted with, and what thoſe are, which they have a diſlike and averſion

to.

to. By learning what is fit to be done, and what to be avoided, our company will be at all times to all perſons acceptable, and our converſation agreeable. It is highly neceſſary and becoming therefore to obſerve a proper reſpect to perſons, according to their reſpective quality and degree; to ſuperiors, reverence; to equals, affability; to inferiors, condeſcenſion. We ſhould alſo moſt carefully avoid the ſpeaking, or the doing of any thing, that may be conſtrued into a want of a juſt eſteem of thoſe, in whoſe company we are, and not appear moroſe and inflexible in converſation, always leaving room for other mens humours with our own.

Nothing ſo much delights and improves the mind of man as converſation, yet his virtue is frequently in danger by it. Wit and humour are often made the vehicles of conveying impure thoughts and looſe deſires, and by colouring over and concealing the

foulneſs of vice, they recommend the practice, and leſſen the guilt of it. We ſhould therefore be particularly careful not to admit filthy and obſcene diſcourſe, being no little incentive to lewd acts, as it tickles the fancy, rouſes the paſſions, and inflames deſire. The miniſters of wantonneſs, who by their laſcivious talk pollute and debauch the morals of youth, ought to be excluded from civil converſation. It is not poſſible to aſſociate with them, without receiving ſome taint from their infectious breath.

It would be of conſiderable benefit to the cauſe of virtue, and preſerve the morals of youth, if the looſe and obſcene expreſſions, frequently occurring in claſſical authors, and writers of plays and romances, were expunged. They convey very impure ideas to the minds of youth at a time of life, when they are moſt ſuſceptible of bad impreſſions, and leaſt upon their guard. The ribaldry

baldry of a Martial, and the immodeſt ſatires of a Juvenal, ſhould not be printed.

Before we deliver our thoughts in public company, we ſhould conſider them well, that they may not contain any thing diſguſting, unſeemly, or unjuſt. Not to be troubleſome to company, we ſhould refrain from a multiplicity of words. Talkativeneſs betrays a weakneſs of underſtanding. Silence will occaſion even fools to be thought wiſe, and prating makes even wiſe men to be accounted fools. The man who talks little, cannot utter many idle words; and he, that talks much, ſeldom utters any thing elſe. It is better to be a ſilent hearer than an unprofitable ſpeaker, by uttering of words, which, inſtead of improving and refining the underſtanding, do an injury to virtue, or offer violence to good manners

We ſhould avoid ſaying any thing in company, which may reflect diſgrace

upon any perſon preſent, or raiſe a bluſh in his countenance. We ſhould take heed not only of what we ſay, but to whom, and before whom, we ſpeak. It would be rude to talk of the chaſtity of Lucretia, where the virtue of a female is ſuſpected; nor is it convenient to ridicule mental or bodily defects, when perſons are preſent, who labour under any ſuch calamity, or affliction. It is a good old proverb, and worthy of remembrance, that we muſt never ſpeak of an halter in his houſe, whoſe father, brother, relation, or acquaintance, was hanged.

It is inſipid to harangue concerning matters out of ſeaſon, and which ſuit not with the taſte of the company. To talk of the gaiety of a court to a clown; to ſully the joy and feſtivity of a birth-day with an account of murders and robberies; to tell doleful ſtories of ghoſts and hobgoblins, when met to be chearful and merry, and to

damp

damp the mirth of the company at a banquet of wine by introducing religious ſubjects, are things not convenient, nor expedient, but highly abſurd, and unbecoming. It is indeed true, that moſt men upon reflection have more reaſon to be afflicted than joyous; it is not however right to turn the houſe of feaſting into mourning, nor to make the company ſad, when met to enjoy themſelves, and to ſoften and alleviate the cares and diſtractions of life by innocent mirth and good humour, to which melancholy and tears are very improper and dull companions.

Things ſacred ſhould not be made the ſubject of looſe wit and raillery. If we believe religion to be true, nothing can excuſe the profaneneſs. Allowing it to be the offspring of ſtate policy, it claims reſpect and reverence, as the religion of our country. Every virtuous perſon muſt condemn the

falſe

falſe humour, and he falls little ſhort of Atheiſm, who approves it. Is it not an unpardonable folly to venture the loſs of heaven, rather than the loſs of an unpardonable jeſt? Homer is juſtly reprehenſible for introducing into his poem ſtories of the luſts and diſputes of his Gods.

To have a right ſenſe of decorum, and to behave with propriety of conduct in company, we ſhould not be morofely grave, no more than madly loquacious. Speech is the band of human intercourſe, but if it is not material and uſeful, it becomes tedious and troubleſome; if it is diſſolute and clamorous, it is unſeemly and criminal; if dull and melancholy, it is imprudent and diſagreeable.

There are ſeveral actions, which, though not criminal, and ſeemingly of light concern, are diſagreeable and offenſive to decency and good manners, are inconſiſtent with, and oppoſite to, the

the character of the accomplished gentleman. If the delicacy of any reader ſhall be diſguſted at the relation *of things filthy and unſeemly to the eye and ear*, he will excuſe, perhaps thank, the writer, when he recollects that he is endeavouring to prevent a greater diſguſt, to wit, *The ſeeing, and hearing them.* He cannot turn ſick at the recital, if the ſight offends him not. I am certain of the practice of every indecency mentioned [none of which ought to be practiſed] by perſons, who would highly reſent the ſuſpicion of the leaſt defect in good breeding; *without which*, [ſo neceſſary is it to every other good quality and attainment,] every man, whatever his ſtation, or profeſſion, is diſagreeable.

It is a common and naufeous cuſtom in company to pick the teeth, and the noſe. The frequent ſcratching of the head, which according to the prevailing mode of hair-dreſſing is not kept

the

the moſt clean, particularly at meals, is a moſt unſeemly practice. It is loathſome to the ſight to ſmell to, what we ourſelves are eating and drinking, and caſts a reflection upon our friend for inviting us to a dinner upon carrion. It ſhews the glutton to keep your hands continually in the diſh, and looks more like the cook than the gentleman to turn the napkin, by continually wiping the greaſy paws, into a diſhclout; more filthy afterwards to wipe the ſweat off the face through the eagerneſs of devouring, [like to a ſwine] not of eating. The coughing or ſneezing in the face of the company is illiberal; not leſs the lolling upon the table, cleaning the ears, putting the hands into the boſom, or more unſeemly parts, which conveys an immodeſt idea. Another unſeemly though deemed a faſhionable practice, being permitted at the tables of the polite and perſons of diſtinction, is the waſh-

ing

ing of the hands and mouth after dinner. The action, though it hath the appearance of cleanlineſs, ſuggeſts ſomething filthy and naſty, and frequently emits very nauſeous ſmells from ſtinking breath, rotten teeth, and ſcurvy gums. Another naſty practice is taking ſnuff at meals, highly diſguſting to weak ſtomachs.

Beſides theſe actions, not fit for the eye to ſee, there are others equally indecent for the ear to hear, and highly unbecoming the carriage of the gentleman. When we meet to paſs away a few hours in innocent mirth and feſtivity, how uncomely is it to compoſe ourſelves to ſleep, or take a ſhort nap; which ſhews, that we have little or no value or eſteem for the converſation of our acquaintance. It is rudeneſs alſo to interrupt and diſturb the diſcourſe of the company by traverſing the room, or yawning, it looking as if the party was wearied and ſurfeited with

with the viſitors, and unfortunately diſcovers the yawner to be of a dull and drowſy diſpoſition. It is not allowable, when the company is engaged in ſerious or facetious converſation, like to an idle lubber, or unthinking clown, to whiſtle; or to chirp, as if you was in an aviary of birds; or to drum upon the table with your knuckles, as if you was beating up for recruits to go to America; or to hum a tune, equally unſeaſonable and diſagreeable as the howling of a dog, or the braying of an aſs at midnight. This ridiculous behaviour ſhews a diſreſpect for the company, to catch at any trifle to amuſe the time, and betrays a want of ſenſe, when we can neither adminiſter, nor receive, any benefit from rational converſation.

It is not leſs a folly to ſit thoughtleſs, penſive, melancholy, talking to yourſelf, and totally regardleſs of the converſation. This affectation of

wiſdom

wiſdom frequently ariſes from pure dulneſs. Places of retirement, not full of company, are ſuited for contemplation, reflection, and meditation. It is alſo indecent to turn your back upon the company, and engage in ſeparate converſation, it being equally abſurd to diſcourſe on buſineſs, or private and perſonal affairs, when met to be chearful and merry, as for a ſick man to be at a banquet of wine. What hath the tradeſman to do with his Ledger, the merchant with his contract, the ſcholar with his book, the parſon with his creed, the phyſician with his preſcription, the lawyer with his brief, or the miniſter with his budget, when engaged in mirth and pleaſantry. What a vanity [to be thought a man of extenſive connections, prodigious buſineſs, much wealth, and large credit,] to pull out a large pocket-book, reading letters and memorandums, looking over bills of exchange, examining

ing drafts, and counting bank notes. For perſons, guilty of theſe and the like abſurdities, no place is more ſuitable than Coventry; they ſhould be deſired to withdraw to their ſhop, counting-houſe, or ſtudy.

It is unbecoming to ſhrug up your ſhoulders, turn upon your heels, nod with your head, or wink with the eye, when a perſon preſent is ſpeaking. Theſe unſeemly geſtures and motions inſinuate, or intend to convey, a reflection upon the veracity, the underſtanding, or the judgment of the ſpeaker; which cannot be pleaſing, muſt be an inſult and affront to a man of feeling and ſenſibility, frequently interrupts, and puts an end to, the good humour of the company. It is not handſome, when you are converſing, to come ſo near to the perſon as to breathe upon him, eſpecially if the breath is foul, or tainted.

The above reflections merit the attention of the gentleman, whom it behooves to be not more cleanly and comely in his manners and dreſs, than in his words and actions. He is not leſs *to do*, than *to ſay*, *any thing*, which may be thought, or conſtrued into, a want of reſpect for his company. He muſt carefuliy heed and correct every thing, which may annoy, offend, or diſguſt any of the ſenſes, otherwiſe he cannot be the agreeable perſon, nor hath he a real pretenſion to the character of the well-bred man.

Being ſent for to town on the death of an intimate friend, whoſe affairs were much embarraſſed, I did not return to the cottage before the expiration of the year. Immediately upon my arrival the Curate made a viſit to the cottage with a moſt pleaſing countenance, not leſs for the happineſs of ſeeing me, than the communicating the good news, he had a few days before received.

received. He gave me the following letter to read.

" Reverend Sir,

" The living of Goodluck, if worth " your acceptance, is at your ſervice. " I ſincerely wiſh it had been more than " 200l. a year.

George-ſtreet, " Your obliged ſervant,
Weſtminſter. " F. Goodenough."

Goodenough, and Goodluck indeed, and well worth your acceptance, if it ſhould be realized. Do you know the Patron? Quite a ſtranger, *replied the Parſon.* I will however take a journey to town, and, if I am deceived, it will be with leſs expectation and expence than on a former application. I endeavoured to diſſuade him from undertaking the journey, fearing, from the oddity of the perſon's name and the living, ſome frolickſome humour of his neighbours. He was reſolved. I wiſhed

wiſhed him good luck, and he departed.

In three weeks matters were accompliſhed. He haſtened into the country to acquaint me with the ſucceſs, and his intention of leaving the curacy to reſide on his living. A laudable intention, ſeldom executed. The parſon prays for a cure of ſouls, and, when obtained, generally leaves it to an hireling. I was not a little ſurpriſed at the extraordinary incident. Who, Sir, *ſaid I*, is the patron? I know not, *he replied*. I was received by the family with the greateſt complaiſance. Every one was forward in ſhewing the moſt profound reſpect, and the table was daily covered with the choiceſt wines, and moſt expenſive delicacies of the ſeaſon. What can all this mean, I ſaid to myſelf? I know not the family, nor could I learn from the ſervants, whom I ſuppoſed to have been enjoined ſecreſy, how they came to know me.

After

After a week's entertainment, more fit for an archbiſhop than a poor curate, I received the preſentation, and a bank note of an hundred pounds to diſcharge the expences attending it, with a requeſt, if that ſum was not found to be ſufficient, to draw upon the houſe for another. When I left the houſe, I thought I was in a dream. I went immediately to the inn, ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed, that the preſentation and the note were forgeries: The artful contrivance of ſome London wag, who had a mind for a little ſport with a country Parſon. To my aſtoniſhment I found the contrary.

I immediately got inſtitution and induction, and am come to acquaint my friend with the fortunate event. To none, *I replied*, more welcome, yet it brings with it its ſorrow in depriving me of the company and converſation of a worthy friend, and chearful companion. He propoſed to finiſh the year at the curacy, deſiring me to ſettle my

affairs,

affairs, and accompany him to the living. Tears ſtarted from the eyes of the old couple. I hope, *ſaid Gaffer*, you will never think of leaving us. We have but a ſhort time to live, ſtay to that period, and then go to your friend. I ſee your deſire, *ſaid the Parſon*; continue with them, whilſt they live, then come, and die with me. We agreed, and all parties were content. I ſpent the evening with the Curate, and engaged him to dine with me at the cottage on the next day, being the wedding-day of the old folk.

The Curate called early in the morning, and took a breakfaſt. I then propoſed a walk to a neighbouring village, to fill up the interval, which was agreeable. In croſſing the poſt-road we were ſtopped by a coach-and-ſix, and four ſervants in new livery. *The gentleman*, who with the lady was in diſguiſe, *aſked*, if we knew ſuch a village, and ſuch a clergyman, naming the Curate. *He*

immediately replied, I am the Clergyman, and the village is before you. The coach-door was opened, we were requeſted to come in, and the ſervant was ordered to drive to the Curate's houſe. The table was ſpread, and the ſtrange gueſts were regaled with country fare. After an hour's converſation they deſired to be conducted to the cottage, inquiring very affectionately, whether the old couple, who formerly lived there, were yet alive, and well. To which *I anſwered*, they were; adding, if they would condeſcend to partake of an homely dinner, which I had prepared for the entertainment of my friend the Parſon, on the celebration of their wedding-day, their company, if they had no better engagement, would be agreeable.

When they entered the cottage, the old couple were in no little buſtle and confuſion at the ſight of the gentleman and lady, not being accuſtomed

to

to ſuch fine viſitors. They got up to retire. The lady, throwing off her diſguiſe, immediately ran to them, and with tears of unfeigned joy embraced them. We were filled with amazement. Then, kneeling down, ſhe lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and ſaid, O God, I thank thee, for that thou haſt heard the prayers of theſe good people for my welfare. Riſing up, ſhe addreſſed them, ſaying, O my dear parents, how do I rejoice to have lived to be your comfort and ſupport, when you moſtly want comfort and ſupport, in your old age. Look at me, do ye not know the unfortunate female, whom ye once loved and cheriſhed for your own daughter? If ye will not believe me, behold the ring ye gave me at parting, and by the token know me to have been that perſon. The ſurpriſe being great, it was with difficulty the old folk could be recovered from the fit, they had fallen into. Joy in-

expreſſible and the moſt affectionate embraces ſucceeded.

This ended, the gentleman preſented them with an annuity of 100*l.* and, turning to the Parſon, ſaid, I hope, Sir, you have taken poſſeſſion of the living, which Lady Fanny Goodenough, now preſent, gave you. The patroneſs approached him, ſaying, Good Sir, I have ever held in remembrance the ſeaſonable advice given in my low eſtate, more eſpecially the relief afforded in that great diſtreſs, and have not, I hope, proved ungrateful. The Parſon replied, The little favour ſhewn to you in your diſtreſs, which was both my duty and inclination to do, is more than recompenſed. At the requeſt of the cottagers I deſired the Lady to give us her hiſtory after leaving the village, the Parſon and the Gentleman having withdrawn.

I went, you may remember, at the recommendation of the good Squire's lady,

lady, to Mr. Speedwell, in Lincolnſhire, a family of repute and opulence. I lived happily for ſome time, when, a rich uncle in town having procured him a place under government, he was obliged to leave the country. No denial could be given, though he wanted it not, Mr. Speedwell having a large family, and his principal dependence for their future ſupport being upon this relation. He wiſhed me to accompany the family. The extraordinary favours I had received made a refuſal difficult. I could not however eraſe from my mind the averſion and deteſtation deeply rooted to a place, which had been the foundation of my afflictions and miſfortunes. I genteelly declined the offer, ſaying, That the place of my birth would revive the ſorrows for the diſtreſſes of my family, which would be an interruption to their domeſtic happineſs. He acquieſced; his lady made me an handſome preſent, and upon quit-

ting the country, recommended me to the family of Mr. Goodenough, who, before his marriage with Lady Grace, was of a ſuſpicious character, and reckoned amongſt the libertines of the age.

The ſituation, not happineſs, was changed. My care and tenderneſs for the young children engaged the affection of the lady. In the abſence of company I was permitted to ſit at table; and, when they took an airing in the carriage, I accompanied them. At the expiration of two years the good lady was ſuddenly taken ill of the ſmall-pox, and finding no hopes of a recovery, ſhe called Mr. Goodenough, and having bound him to the performance of her dying requeſt, ſaid, If you ſhould have an inclination to change your condition, take Fanny, you are ſufficiently rich, you want no addition to your fortune, and you know her worth. She is of a good diſpoſition, will make you

happy,

happy, and her gratitude for the diſtinguiſhed honour done her will bind and oblige her to treat my dear children with love and tenderneſs. This ſaid, ſhe died.

When the days of mourning were ended, he hinted an intention of marrying again, and aſked my opinion upon the ſubject. *I replied*, it became not a perſon in my ſituation to adviſe in a matter of ſuch intereſting conſequence to the happineſs of his family. If he had fixed the reſolution of altering his condition, I humbly hoped, that he would take care to procure a good mother for the dear pledges of a moſt loving and affectionate wife. What think you, Fanny, of yourſelf? Could you make that good mother? Seeing my confuſion, which aroſe from fear of a baſe deſign [the former experience of the vile practices of your ſex, Sir, juſtified the reaſonableneſs of this ſuſpicion] and going to retire, he ſeized

my hand, ſaying, You, Fanny, are that good mother, recommended with her laſt breath by my beloved wife. Look up, and give attention. I am under a greater obligation, than the fulfilling this dying requeſt, to make you happy, for the injuries I have done you, and the diſtreſs I have brought upon you. Injured and diſtreſſed me, Sir? Pardon me; it is not in your diſpoſition to offer an injury to any one; not to me, I am certain, who was an entire ſtranger to your perſon, till I came into your worthy family, and have been continually receiving favours from you, and your lady. Say, Fanny, you will forgive, and I will relate the cruel affair. Moſt readily, Sir, can I forgive a gentleman, who hath never offended me; you are miſtaken in the perſon. Look at me, do you recollect this villain's face? Sir, you amaze, and aſtoniſh me! Villain! Yes, *Fanny*, villain. Have you forgot, when, in croſſing a common field,

you

you was baſely importuned by a young gentleman, who, out of revenge for your honeſt and virtuous reſiſtance, had you taken before a juſtice of peace, charged you with privately ſtealing ſundry bank notes, and you was committed to ——. O, Sir, haſtily interrupting, you are ſuch a gentleman, that you could not have been that ——, I tremble to ſay ——. Villain, *ſaid he*, and I will now atone for the wrong done, and the miſery ſuffered by that villainy [which I have heard from Mr. Speedwell] in giving my hand. He rung the bell immediately, ordered all the ſervants up, declared to them his intention, and gave to each a bank note, adding, that I was deſerving of every reſpect, they could ſhew me. They were highly pleaſed with the declaration, and they found in me a generous miſtreſs. The next day we were married, and that, Sir, is the gentleman, who

is taking a turn with our friend the Parſon.

The words were ſcarce uttered, when they entered, leading between them a venerable old man, feeble and decrepit through age and infirmities, and worn out with misfortunes and ſorrows, whom they had accidentally met in the village, inquiring for the cottage. After reſting, and refreſhing himſelf with a glaſs of wine, he thus addreſſed himſelf to the old couple: How many years have you lived on this ſpot? Upwards of thirty, anſwered the old man. I hope, I am right. Then trembling with fear, he aſked, Did a female of the name of Worthy ever lodge with you? What is become of her? Is ſhe yet with you, or where can I go to find her? They readily replied, No ſuch female lived in this cottage, nor have we ever heard of the name of Worthy, either in the village, or the county. The old

folk

folk were right, for they were entirely ignorant of my maiden name, which I had carefully concealed to avoid bringing diſgrace upon the family.

The old man ſeemed much ſurpriſed, and greatly dejected, with the anſwer. I immediately ſaid, Pray, Sir, what may be your reaſon for this inquiry? Why ſo uneaſy and caſt down at the anſwer? O, Madam, that female, that wretched unhappy creature, whom I inquire after, and of whom after a long and fruitleſs inquiry I had been made to believe, I ſhould hear of at this place, was my eldeſt, and, if now living, my only daughter. The lady fetching a deep ſigh, fell backwards, ſaying, *O my father, my father!* to the aſtoniſhment of all preſent. When recovered, ſhe ran to the aged parent, and embracing his knees, begged his bleſſing. Words cannot expreſs the pleaſure, which was ſeen on every countenance at this fortunate meeting, and diſcovery.

Juſt as we were riſing [the Curate having informed the company, that an elegant ſupper was providing at his houſe by the order of the Squire] a footman came to the gate, inquiring, if a Mr. Hopkins lodged there. I am the perſon, Mr. Hopkins replied. Your company, Sir, is requeſted for a few minutes by a lady and gentleman at the Anchor and Hope, the ſign of the alehouſe in the village. I am at preſent, friend, engaged. If the parties are upon buſineſs, I will call upon them in the courſe of the evening. Mr. Goodenough ſaid, Pray, Sir, go, and take the Parſon with you, or I will accompany you; the party being ſtrangers, it may not be prudent to go alone. We will excuſe your abſence, and wait your return. The Parſon roſe up, and away we went.

When we drew near to the alehouſe, we obſerved a poſt-coach and four with three ſervants in livery. We were immediately

mediately uſhered into the parlour, and received with great politeneſs. A few minutes over, and having drank a glaſs of wine, the lady broke ſilence, ſaying, Which of you, gentlemen, is Mr. Hopkins? I am, Madam, at your ſervice. You have now found the gentleman, Sir, proceed in the inquiry. Excuſe this abrupt invitation, Sir, from a ſtranger; your ready compliance merits our grateful acknowledgment. This gentleman [meaning the Parſon] I ſuppoſe to be your friend, in confidence therefore I ſhall ſpeak. You have been ſome time I underſtand at this retired cottage, where, through your charity, a deſtitute, forlorn, and deſpicable creature was taken in, and harboured. What, Sir, is become of her? Hath ſhe left you? Is ſhe ſtill with you, or numbered amongſt the dead? [In uttering the laſt expreſſion he fetched a deep ſigh] Is ſhe—— I interrupted him, ſaying, Sir, I muſt firſt beg leave

to

to know, who you and the lady are, before I ſhall give an anſwer to any of your queſtions.

They withdrew to a corner of the room, and after a ſhort conſultation the gentleman came forward, and ſaid, By your behaviour, hitherto, I believe you to be the gentleman. The ſecret, I am going to diſcloſe, [which I muſt intreat you to bury in utter oblivion] will convince you of the confidence, I place in you. I ſuppoſe your friend can be truſted with a ſecret? I replied, Sir, my friend is a worthy clergyman, and though a Proteſtant, not a Popiſh, prieſt, he will never reveal, what in confidence is communicated to him. Know then, Sir, my name is Mr. ——, [ſeeing us ſtart and change countenance] too well known, I perceive, for my baſe and villainous intrigues with the fair ſex. This lady's ſiſter, Miſs Worthy, I firſt debauched; then, to my ſhame I now ſpeak it, moſt cruelly

and

and ungenerouſly deſerted. Her diſtreſſes are not unknown to me. Reſolved to be the penitent, [a poor ſatisfaction to Heaven for the miſchiefs occaſioned; yet, I hope, Reverend Sir, it will be accepted,] and make her ample amends, if it was poſſible, for the ſufferings, which ſhe hath endured, I came to this village. To this ſpot I have at no little expence traced her. If I found her dead, I purpoſed [to recompenſe in a low degree the injuries, I had done to the reſpectable and reputable family,] to marry this her ſiſter, whoſe brothers I have decently provided for in the reſpective trades, they had learnt, and liberally ſupported her, free from every baſe deſign, ſince the unfortunate father, of whom I know nothing, left the town. If, Sir, you are able to give us the leaſt information in this matter, you cannot do a more grateful act to both parties, and upon reflection a more pleaſing one to yourſelf.

We,

We, being ſtruck with ſurpriſe, and not a little happy at the diſcovery, ſtared at one another, not knowing, what reply to make. At laſt the Curate anſwered, I think, Sir, we ſhall be able to give you full ſatisfaction; at the ſame time we muſt deſire, that you will be ſilent, till we think proper to unfold this wonderful affair. We know the woman, and where ſhe is to be found. Mr. —— haſtily interrupting, and with the moſt pleaſing countenance, ſaid, Where? Be compoſed, Sir, and you ſhall know; nay more, ſee her ſoon, though I fear not much to your content, for ſhe will never be yours. Upon ſaying this he fell back, and upon recovery cried, Nanny, [to the young Lady] forgive me, I loved, and, was ſhe ſtill in being, muſt love, your ſiſter. O happy man, if thou canſt make the leaſt reparation for the wrongs and injuries you have done her! Favour me, Gentlemen, with the ſight of her. O,

Sirs,

Sirs, ſaid the young Lady, grant, if you can, his requeſt. He is now, though late, the honeſt man, and ſatisfy alſo my longing to ſee a beloved and loſt ſiſter. Follow us, ſaid the Parſon, but remember to be ſilent. They got up, and accompanied us to the cottage.

When he came there, the company was gone to the Parſon's to make ready the ſupper. This, Sir, I ſaid, was Fanny's habitation; but, alas! ſhe is gone, and that elderly couple were her ſecond parents. Grief and ſorrow immediately overſpread the countenance of Mr. ——, and going to break forth, I added, We ſhall not be at a loſs to find the poor creature. Come, my old friends, will ye walk? No, replied Mr. ——. My Fanny's friends ſhall never walk, whilſt I have a carriage to accommodate them. Step for the coach, John. We left them, and walked on.

When we came to the Parſon's, he introduced the Gentleman and Lady, ſaying,

ſaying, Theſe good folk were to have ſupped with us this evening at the cottage, permit me to introduce them into your company. I promiſe, they will afford you no leſs pleaſure, than they have done us. Your friends, Sir, ſaid Mr. Goodenough, are welcome. We wiſh, that the accommodations were better, than the ſhortneſs of the time for providing admitted; this unexpected viſit however will plead an excuſe. We fear, Sir, ſaid Mr. ———, that we ſhall be an interruption to the pleaſure of the company, and crave leave to withdraw. By no means, ſaid Mr. Goodenough.

The arrival of the old couple, and ſupper coming in, prevented a reply. We were all merry and chearful, Mr. ——— excepted; who ate little, and was particularly uneaſy.

After ſupper he took a turn into the garden with the Parſon, to whom he expreſſed his uneaſineſs, and wiſh to be

be gratified in the promiſed ſight, adding that he felt no little concern, becauſe he could not partake of the mirth of the table. Your wiſh, replied the Parſon, can only be gratified by the lady, whom we left in the parlour; ſhe, and no other, can favour you with the ſight of your beloved object. That you may not be any longer deprived of that pleaſure, let us return to the parlour. I am perſuaded, that ſhe will grant any requeſt, which I ſhall make.

During the abſence of the Parſon and Mr. ——— I had beckoned to Mrs. Goodenough to retire to the next room, where I laid open the whole affair. She ſcreamed out, which brought all the company to her aſſiſtance with the Parſon and Mrs. ———, who at the very inſtant entered the room. Upon recovering herſelf, and fixing her eyes ſtedfaſtly on Mr. ———, ſhe ſaid, Art thou Mr. ———? Then turning

turning to the young lady, And art thou my deareſt ſiſter, Nanny? If thou art, behold thy aged father. This ſaid, ſhe fainted again. Mr. Goodenough and Mr. Worthy were aſtoniſhed at the ſtrangeneſs of the adventure, not leſs Miſs Nanny and Mr. ———, whoſe face was covered with ſhame. Coming to herſelf, ſhe addreſſed Mr. ——— O! unhappy man, may heaven forgive thee! May the injury and wrong done to me be atoned for and expiated by thy kindneſs to my beloved ſiſter. O! my earthly parent, whoſe afflictions have been many and ſevere, do thou alſo forgive, conſent to the happy union, and perfect the repentance begun in him.

Amazed at the unexpected ſight, and confounded at the unparalleled goodneſs, Mr. ——— for ſome time ſtood motionleſs, and ſpeechleſs. The ſorrow and uneaſineſs, he felt at heart,

were

were viſible on his countenance. That face, which had ſo often, and ſo ſucceſsfully, worn the maſk, was now the faithful index of his troubled mind. We were all affected, and concerned. Looking up, and trembling with fear, he approached, and ſaid, Canſt thou, generous creature, forgive this villain? Permit, Madam, [looking at Mr. Goodenough, who bowed conſent] this guileleſs ſalutation, and [turning to the father] do you, venerable Sir, grant your worthy daughter's requeſt. It was moſt readily and chearfully granted, and the next day, to the content and ſatisfaction of all parties they were married.

The cottage was purchaſed, and put into good repair for the old couple, who deſired to ſpend the remainder of their days in a place, that had been the cauſe of ſo much unexpected happineſs. The day of the diſcovery

was

was agreed to be annually kept at the village in commemoration of theſe proſperous and fortunate events. The two families continued a month on the happy ſpot.

Juſt upon their leaving the village came a man, woman, and two children with a paſs. They aſked for a direction to the churchwarden, and at the ſame time requeſted the Parſon's charity. They were moſt deplorable objects indeed, being in a ſtarving condition. Mr. Goodenough ſaid, Theſe itinerants are generally cheats, and the paſſes forged. It is an abuſe of charity to relieve them. The Parſon looked at Mrs. Goodenough. I underſtand you, Rev. Sir. I do not forget the former diſtreſs, nor your good advice, never to turn away my face from any poor man, whoſe poverty may have been his misfortune, not his fault; or, if wicked, reflection is a ſufficient puniſhment for paſt guilt. Right, Madam, anſwered

anſwered the Parſon. I rejoice to find you have ſo retentive a memory, and the alteration of circumſtances hath made no change in the goodneſs of your diſpoſition.

She opened her purſe, and was going to give the wretched creatures a guinea, when Mr. ——— ſtepping forward, ſaid, withhold your hand, Madam, you will have no reaſon for being thus profuſe, if you knew the parties, whom you are about to relieve. The appearance of want, ſhe replied, is ſufficient reaſon for the exerciſe of charity. I had rather be the weak credulous fool, in affording relief to all ſuitors indiſcriminately, than a worthy object of diſtreſs ſhould go away unrelieved, and periſh through want, for fear of deception, and impoſition. The Parſon addreſſing Mr. ——— I think Sir, after your knowledge of this lady's ſtory, you ſhould be ready, not backward, to give aſſiſtance. They

may

may not be leſs deſerving than Miſs Fanny was. Do you know the parties? Mr. ——— deſired me to detain them, whilſt he withdrew a few minutes with the Parſon.

In the mean time the man and the woman fell on their knees, and intreated pardon of Mrs. Goodenough for the injury done her, and not to increaſe their ſufferings by reſenting it, and preventing the pariſh relief. What injury you have done me, ſhe replied, I know not; take, what I intended, this guinea. I will not add to your preſent afflictions by an inquiry; go your way.

Immediately Mr. ——— and the Parſon returned, and called them back, ſaying, I pity your diſtreſs, though it is the juſt reward of your villainy. Mr. ——— whiſpered to Mrs. Goodenough, who ſtood amazed. Well, Sir, ſhe replied, let us not interrupt this general happineſs with the remembrance

brance of paſt wickedneſs. I perceive a conſcious ſhame to riſe on their countenances. They were only the inſtruments of ſeduction, forgive the reproach Mr. ———. If I can pardon, what was done out of malicious wickedneſs, you muſt not reſent the guilt of a ſin, which you bribed them to commit. Though undeſerving, if they are truly ſenſible of the wrong done, and are diſpoſed to live honeſtly for the future, let us encourage the good diſpoſition, by making a proviſion for them, and their helpleſs and innocent children. Mr. —— conſented. £. 100 was collected, and given to the Parſon to lay out for their benefit, and they immediately ſet off.

Concluſion.

The Parſon called upon me the next morning at the cottage after the departure of his worthy gueſts, and with tears of joy congratulated the old

couple with their annuity, and the pleaſing proſpect of ſpending the remainder of their days in comfort, when they would, on account of their age and infirmity, have ſoon been incapable of ſupporting themſelves. Then turning to me, he ſaid, You ſee, Sir, how providence intereſts itſelf in the preſervation and happineſs of the virtuous and good. What an encouragement to bear with patience and reſignation the ſevereſt afflictions and diſtreſſes, rather than forfeit our integrity. Not only this lady, the unfortunate female, who, having a firm confidence in the goodneſs of God, was unexpectedly delivered out of all her troubles, and comforted in the depth of ſorrow, when through her deſperate ſituation ſhe was almoſt driven to diſtraction; not only this lady, but you, Sir, and every man, who reflects upon the paſt events of his life, will acknowledge, that in the many changes and chances, which

which have happened to him, he hath, either perſonally received ſingular advantages, been extricated out of the moſt perplexing difficulties, or been releaſed from the moſt diſtreſſing misfortunes, in a manner the moſt amazing and unaccountable, and by cauſes the moſt unlikely and unpromiſing, which neither his ſagacity, wiſdom, power, nor riches could have accompliſhed, or procured. The finger of God is in theſe things viſible. The reader may be aſſured of receiving ſuch comfortable aid, when in diſtreſs and neceſſity, if by a virtuous and pious life he humbly endeavours to approve himſelf worthy of receiving it.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM